

February 1936

*The American Magazine of*

# ART

*Including "Creative Art"*



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THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE OF ART INCLUDING CREATIVE ART

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AMERICA'S LEADING ART PUBLICATION

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*The American  
Magazine of*

# ART

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"Creative Art"*

VOLUME 29

FEBRUARY 1936

NUMBER 2

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## AUTHORS IN THIS ISSUE

LANGDON WARNER is Keeper of the Oriental Department of the Fogg Art Museum of Harvard University, but in writing on this, and other articles on the Chinese Exhibition at Burlington House, he brings wider experience than that to be found in a sheltered academic existence. He has been frequently in the field in China and Japan, and has won the respect, not only of western orientalists, but also of eastern scholars themselves. He has written for a good many magazines in this country and Europe, and is author of *The Long Old Road in China*, and *Japanese Sculpture of the Suiko Period*. He is now at work on a more popular book on Japanese sculpture to appear this year. Mr. Warner was for several years Director of the Pennsylvania Museum of Art, in Philadelphia. Together with Horace H. F. Jayne, he edited the important quarterly

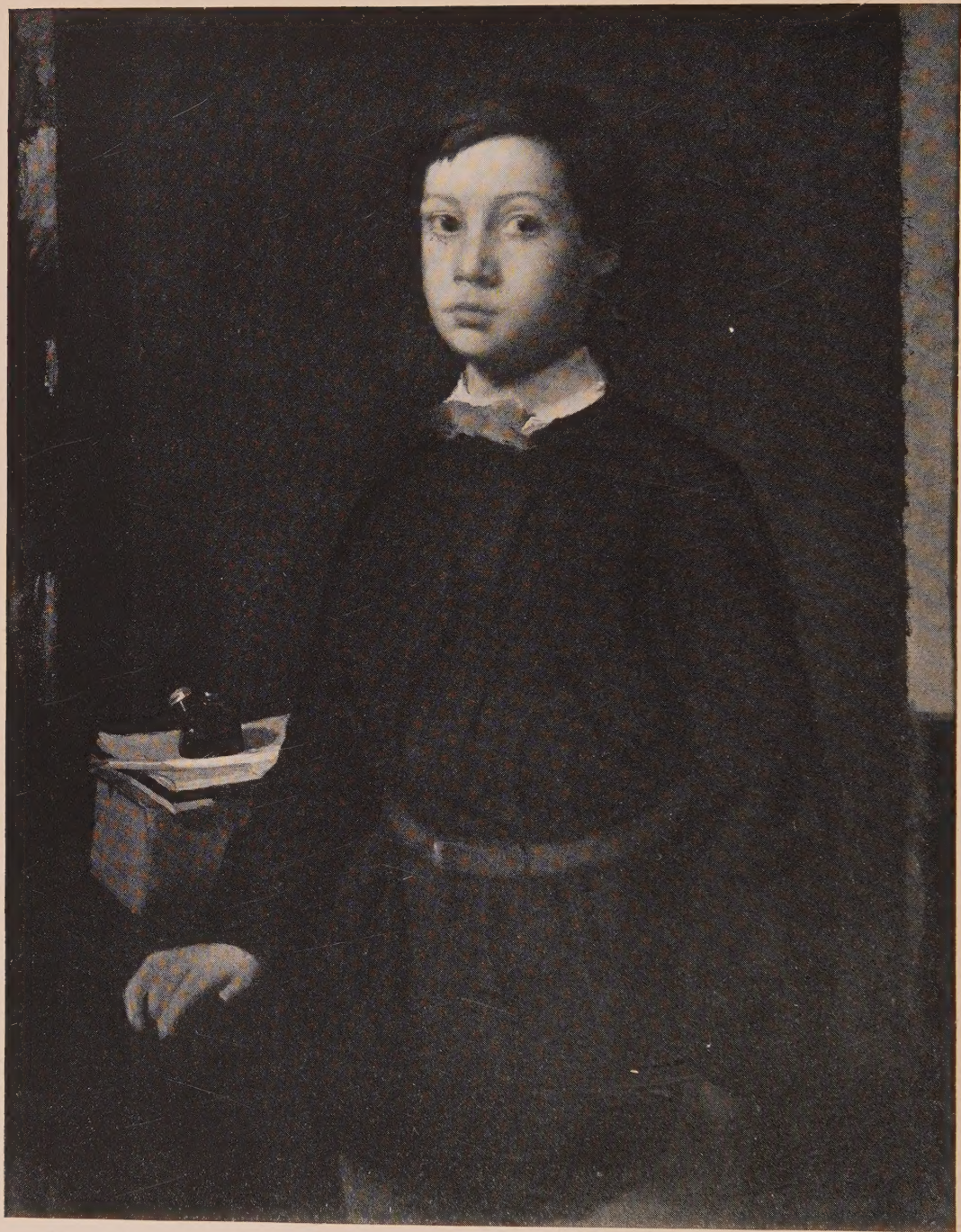
*Eastern Art*, which has been quiescent for several years.

ERNEST BRACE has written several one-man articles appearing in recent issues of the Magazine. He lives in Bearsville, New York, near Woodstock. Among the artists of whose work he has so sympathetically written are Alexander Brook, Henry Lee McFee, Arnold Blanch, and Henry Mattson. In the near future an article by Mr. Brace on the work of Franklin C. Watkins will appear.

ALLEN TUCKER lives quietly in New York, but the friends he has made through his book, *Design and the Idea*, may be found all over the country. As anyone can tell from reading his book, Mr. Tucker combines the qualities necessary in a painter and teacher. Articles by him have appeared in *The Arts* as well as in this Magazine.







EDGAR DEGAS: PORTRAIT OF RENÉ DE GAS  
A Recent Acquisition of the Smith College Museum of Art



February 1936

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## CURE FOR COLLECTORITIS

SOME may think that following the present trend of the world at large we are inclined to stress a little too much the economic problems of the smaller art world. But, of course, if the arts were not important to us we should not feel any interest in having them firmly established. The concern we feel for the artist and what he has to give a weary and a puzzled world is obviously much more than an economic concern. A discerning selfishness tells us that the problems affecting the successful functioning of our artists are basic ones. This is true because the artists' realm of creation merges with the workaday realm of production and distribution and consumption. But that is not the only reason. The processes of creation can often be best known and best clarified by the artist even if he works in what seem on the surface to be non-utilitarian media such as easel painting or sculpture. At his best the artist works in the world of ideas, whether the tangible product of his creative process is marketable or not. This, then, is the place of the so-called "fine" artist.

Granted that this contact with the world of ideas (or ideals) is maintained, does it follow, as the night the day, that the only thing a fine artist can make is "fine" art? Cannot his same skills, his same creative principles, be used in the less theoretical activities of the world?

Patronage from an extremely limited section of the public will not suffice; it hasn't sufficed for a very long time. At present only the few are in a position to buy high-priced works of fine art; not many institutions of a sufficiently public nature to require murals are in the market for them.

What, then, holds the artist back from entering fields of activity in which an honest and sufficient living is possible? Is it snobbishness? Partly. Is it an aloof professionalism? Partly that, too. How much justification for this professional snobbishness is there, the layman asks? Well, some of it is self-protection of a perfectly natural, human kind. The system and the ideology being what they are, artists, naturally, are chary of foregoing the old condition for a doubtful new one. If the public didn't demand rarity and the "unique piece," but could evaluate quality in objects which can perfectly well be duplicated, the way would be made easier for artists. But collectoritis is, for all its exclusive sound, a common disease among artists.

Even so, a cure for it has been begun. For example, prints are gaining in popularity and their favor in the public eye has increased not only the number of plates produced but also the number of proofs pulled; some fine artists have brought their abilities to bear on problems of decoration and fashion and found that they came through the ordeal unscathed; others have discovered a perfectly suitable and congenial outlet in the illustration of fine books in trade editions. All these fields, be it noted, are open to cultivation and need not deprive the artist of contact with his accustomed world of ideas as long as decoration, fashion, and illustration are openly pursued and not brought surreptitiously into the studio.

*(Continued on page 137)*



# FOUR SHORT MONTHS OF CHINA

## CHINESE PAINTING AT BURLINGTON HOUSE

By LANGDON WARNER

IT IS DOUBTFUL if Peking or Sianfu in their great days held such treasures of Chinese art as London holds today, in Burlington House and the two museums. For if one chose the Imperial Court of China in the early eleventh century to visit the great paintings of the day and of high antiquity, no sixteenth- or seventeenth-century porcelains would have been there nor any gorgeous Ch'ing brocades and velvets. Even the early Buddhist sculpture that we have lately come to venerate was not at that time available. It stood neglected in the cave chapels of distant provinces into which no man in his senses would penetrate. Or if one, hoping to survey its whole gamut, visited the sumptuous court of K'ang Hsi at the end of the seventeenth century, these bronzes and jades that have been turned up in the excavations of the last ten years would still have been underground—and still no ancient Buddhist sculpture. But a bus or a taxi or a stroll down Piccadilly today fetches you up to the threshold of the great tan linen-covered galleries that hold more than thirty centuries of Chinese beauty.

The fourteen rooms where the annual Academy exhibition is held have been familiar enough, with the Last Duchess hanging in her frame in paint or gossiping through the crowd in the flesh. Here critics are used to making hash of the Hanging Committee on Varnishing Day, and will again. But they do not do so during these four short months of China. No, the magazine art critics come and stare and come again next day, but they are silent. This is the sort of stuff before which even they are respectful. They turn for crumbs of information to the sinologues and the archaeologists and to the pottery experts. There is a general sense of healthy ignorance abroad. The westerners who know most and have studied China all their lives, begin each sentence with: "Of course I don't *know*, but the best opinion today seems to be. . . ."

But you have asked me to write home about the paintings and, among the hundreds, to send back illustrations that shall give you some idea of it all. First of all you must take my word for it that in these galleries there are no pictures that are ignoble or tricky or sensational, nothing painted to frighten the bourgeois suddenly into purchase. One may not know the purpose of each picture or even always comprehend its subject thoroughly. But as you enter each room it is immediately clear that you are in the presence of master works, in a hundred different manners, covering a range of cultures from the time of Christ to the time of George IV, and that every single one of them is the sober, available best from that craftsman.

There were no "easel paintings" in China to become stale in the drawing room where a picture, by definition, is furniture. These, by definition, were "hand-scrolls" or "rolled things." Some few, no doubt, were almost fixtures in temples. But they were never pure decorations and were not furniture even there, but ritual objects used in the liturgy or hung *ex voto* in a parent's name.

Let us, in desperation at the task, begin at the chronological beginning with one of the first things that can be called a painting. This, perhaps, is the set of colored horses impressed by a wooden stamp on the wet clay of a wall-tile from a tomb, and then colored. Hardly a painting you will say—but considering its purpose and material the better picture for all that. I admired it for the grand pattern and proud formality that a clean-carved block of wood makes on the clay that receives it. It should be the model for all modern block-printers and all the tile-makers of today.

Next in chronology perhaps come the paintings of the eighth and ninth centuries found by Sir Aurel Stein and Professor Pelliot and von le Coq in the Gobi Desert or about its China edge. The Louvre has lent these, and Berlin, and a great store more are to be seen at the British Museum fifteen minutes off.





FIGURE 1.  
FRAGMENT  
OF ICON

Eighty-Ninth  
Century

Courtesy of the  
Royal Academy  
of Art



For the most part they are prim icons (Figure 1) made by the priests along the trade routes—penny plain and tuppence colored—for the use of pilgrims to India, the Holy Land. Let it be understood that these are not master-works nor do they smell of the studio. Better than that, they give us generous hints about the things we are always trying to get at from the past: how religion entered into the daily lives of the people, how symbols that are odd to our eyes were accepted, familiar things in theirs. The costumes of the time are accurately shown, and the saddles, bridles, gowns, and boots. These at least are no symbols but the very things themselves.

When the high gods are shown it is another matter. For a strict convention from India, hardly modified, prescribes the postures and scarves and, in many cases, the colors. Only

the manner of drawing differs, for the artist's tools and his shorthand are pure Chinese.

On the wall next to several examples of these charms and ritualistic and didactic paintings that were made by priests as part of their very trade in expounding the doctrine, hang three largish fragments of wall-painting, each from the same cave monastery on the Turkestan border (Figure 2). They were sent by Harvard College.

Nothing could be more instructive than this juxtaposition. The humble, almost diagrammatic, thing produced admirably and safely within its well-known convention and—but a foot away—the work of a professional whose patron was indeed the church but whose immediate task was to cover one hundred and fifty feet of whitewashed wall from the floor to the roof fifteen feet above his head. Sym-



FIGURE 2.

FRAGMENT OF  
WALL PAINTING  
FROM THE CAVES  
AT TUN HUANG

Lent by The Fogg Art  
Museum to the London  
Exhibition





FIGURE 3. LANDSCAPE

Lent by the Chinese Government. Courtesy of the Royal Academy of Art

bolts, of course, but on another scale. Didactic, of course, but done with a magnanimous swing that only a master craftsman can afford.

These fragments show but the heads of lesser divinities with nobly coiled hair and serene eyebrows of jade green. But to look at them sends a shiver down my spine, for they are veritable bits of eighth-century gods out of those chill caves hewn from the mother rock. To stand before them, even in Burlington House off Piccadilly, is to have a realizing sense of the religion of the Buddha and to know something of the legions fresh

from home that march into that oasis. From there the conscripts were assigned to garrison duty on the loop of the Great Wall of China that comes nigh cranking in at that point from the northern marches.

To study these scraps is to learn from the pigments something of the caravan trade and of the local mineral resources as well as about eighth-century chemistry and physics. Once we thought those pigments were minerals fetched there, or found nearby, and merely ground up to be mixed with glue and applied over clay whitewash. Now we suspect that



FIGURE 4. LANDSCAPE, SUNG DYNASTY

Courtesy of the Royal Academy of Art

they include substances not so readily prepared or simply used in the natural state. Chemists tell us that lead carbonate needs acid in its manufacture and that the mercuric sulphide does not seem to be in its natural form. So, too, stains are present which a chemist, who knows what he is about, can manufacture from certain plants. Were these plants native to Tun Huang? Were seeds fetched there to grow them? Or were they brought by caravan?

On the four walls of a cave-chapel twenty-seven feet high, seventy feet long, and forty

wide, and on its ceiling, I cannot calculate how many square yards there would be of drawing and painting. But there were dozens of such caves in the group and the task of merely covering that acreage implies highly organized gangs of trained craftsmen. The master laid it out with try-squares and plumb-lines and long strings wet with India ink, to be snapped on the white wall as carpenters and masons snap their chalk-lines today in the West. With pin and string the great haloes were established. A head here and a shoulder there was fixed, and placid hands,



where they formed the immemorial hieratic gestures, were drawn. On this pattern, of set points and angles and proportions, other draftsmen took up the delineation of drapery and layed out the adamantine structure of the thrones.

Then, and not till then, skilled hands spread on the pigments in their traditional places, from jugs of color already mixed and tested. So, and not otherwise, within the limits of the first established great cartoon, the job was completed by inevitable and foreseen stages. The priests then came in with bell, book, and candle, to consecrate the work. Pick and basket-men would then report that the cave next door was excavated, the mud had dried over the stone walls, and that the fresco gang might move to set up their scantlings and apply the pattern and the color. So it must have gone in the making of these enormous walls of paintings. The more one examines them in detail, and in gross, the better one comprehends the task of the painters' guild. But the curate from the country, come in to see these heathen picturings, is nudging my elbow to persuade me to move from before them, and it comes with almost a relief to remember that the heads of these eighth-century gods are rumored to be the inspiration of a famous London *coiffeur* for his spring fashions.

If all this seems remote from the job of writing home about the paintings, it only seems so. For it is one way to look at pictures and at least it shows some consideration for the essential purpose and the materials and technique. Now if I could but cut out all irrelevances and comparisons that end in blind alleys as I try to look at the Things Themselves, I should be lucky. But in the next great period of Chinese painting—the tenth and twelfth centuries of the Sung dynasty—we get no gang labor and no great simple Buddhist church with its undivided aims, for the patron. Here we are in much deeper water.

For now come individual masters of a breadth and depth I shall never fathom. Their purposes are only dimly apparent and their deceptively facile technique leaves me a whole parish behind. I can catch sight of

them only when they are past their goal and have slowed down to something like my pace. Sometime before the middle of the twelfth century Hui Tsung's Academy managed to make art stiffen into beautiful frigidity. There had been a natural, if slavish, admiration of the earlier giants. Lesser spirits were spending laborious years learning how rocks and waves should be put down in ink, only to lose all sight of *why*. Today we can read about calligraphy and its twin, painting. Even I can talk with conviction of its mysterious power and delicate symbolism. But I can't write with a brush as the Chinese do and I am certain, therefore, that I'm not fit to talk about it.

There are a full dozen paintings in the Sung spirit at the London exhibition which are of profound importance. That is, perhaps, four times as many as London has seen before, and it is a pleasure to see the respect with which they are being received. Though it was only last year that a lady could visit Peking and "bring back practically nothing, my dear—only eight Sung paintings to let into the dining room panels." It is not till tea time and you have been on your feet before the paintings since ten in the morning (for the authorities will not let you kneel as you ought) that you become slightly ill-natured and knowing. Then someone reminds you that the *great* Hsia Kuei is not here at all. But look at the "Myriad Miles of the Yangtse River" which is here, as it unfolds its greath length. There is a composition that makes it physically impossible for anyone to refrain from the old trite comparison to music. I don't know if it is a symphony or a mass. But I will add my bit to the vocabulary of comparison by saying that it ends on the flutes. That long misty sand-spit that silvers into silence is flutes, or else the voice of a boy.

Sentiment apart, this painting is of great importance in the West because it is the best example that I know (though not the most obvious, of course) of a really sublime composition executed by a painter entirely capable of carrying out that great essential, but not quite up to the task of the most masterly brush-strokes. And so it comes about that



FIGURES 5 AND 6. MA FEN: THE HUNDRED GEESE, INK SCROLL  
Two details are reproduced on this and the facing page. Lent by the Honolulu  
Academy of Art to the London Exhibition. Courtesy of the Royal Academy of Art





the scroll is grand beyond all praise when seen from a little distance but when scrutinized it insensibly becomes not so great. The other Hsia Kuei—the great one in the Palace which they did not send—has in my memory no flaw whatever. I should here confess that this criticism was first suggested to me by Mr. Harold Henderson and that Sir Percival David, the amazingly discerning Director of the Exhibition, did not go out of his way to contradict.

That is the kind of thing discussed each night after Burlington House is closed and we all relax to quarrel at dinner. So too we talk over that pair of scrolls attributed also to Hsia Kuei (active circ. 1180-1230) which have been sent from America, one from the Nelson Gallery of Art in Kansas City and the other from Mrs. Moore in New York. Two others like them are in existence, but no one of us has ever seen all four and we naturally mistrust comparison by photograph, whether of color or of the subtleties of Chinese ink.

But the committee of the Royal Academy has chosen to show the Kansas City edition and evidently approves of it. No one objected when I suggested that we consider all four of them to be copies (nearly contemporary) of a lost original. That is not a bad example of

the straits we are reduced to in the West in considering Sung painting. But it is a mercy to realize that we have got a bit beyond fiercely insisting on dates and specific authorship. For at last it has been pounded into our thick western heads that, during the most important five centuries of Chinese painting, there have been masters each of whom could draw in *every* manner. Thus the better we know Hsia Kuei, for instance, in one phase, the harder it is to recognize him in another. After all, we owe some of our most respectable Sung dynasty paintings to their followers in Ming times. Western art historians, with their categories and water-tight compartments naturally expect us to be somewhat more scholarly than this would imply. But to be knowing on Sung art is to be demonstrably wrong from the start, as the orientals keep reminding us.

In this same gallery, stretched to its full length under glass, is the Ma Fen ink scroll of "The Hundred Geese" (Figures 5 and 6) lent by the Honolulu Academy of Art. This is not so much a painting as a whole morning on the marshes with the sight, and the memory, of the long strung-out gaggle streaming high overhead or circling to settle. I have walked before dawn and through a misty sunrise for two good hours below their shouting, horn-blowing lines and, all day after, I have ached with the excitement and beauty of it. Here in the picture is a progress of marshland and stubble field peopled with the geese. It holds to a remarkable degree one characteristic of the best Chinese landscape painting in that it is a memory and not a portrait. For the peculiar validity in it seems an impression left on the brain, not the instantaneous snapshot a gunner records when he looks aloft. Our own Frank Benson inimitably catches what the gunner does. Birds' very attitudes are there, and grand shapes and the values of backgrounds. But your Sung pondered and remembered, setting down birds—or mankind (Figure 7)—not against appropriate backgrounds of dead nature, but as indistinguishably part of the whole tendency of things.

It would be only too simple to slip into the easy path and to report to you lists of paintings and of artists' names. But the catalogue



FIGURE 7a. DETAIL OF PAINTING ON  
FACING PAGE

Courtesy of the Royal Academy of Art





FIGURE 7. LANDSCAPE WITH MAN AND WATER BUFFALOES, SUNG DYNASTY

Courtesy of the Royal Academy of Art

is available for 1s. 6d. and it is a monument of compressed and scholarly discrimination. Few of us in America have seen most of these things, and many have seen none. It is, therefore, useless to expect mere names to summon up the works of art. Neither in my first few days can I attempt to offer you any valid estimate of this group of paintings. Of course one wishes that every example attributed to every great Chinese painter were here, and that one might compare them and settle a thousand disputes and doubts. But such thoughts cannot last long in the galleries

where new discoveries are to be made on every wall. One fragment of a somewhat darkened scroll that I had passed unwittingly a dozen times suddenly sang out to me from its case. It was numbered 2535 and attributed to Li Chên (late tenth century A. D.). Tangled forest showed there, rough to penetrate and deep as the wood in a bad dream. But, of a sudden, it took me back to a time when I had seemed to be struggling in that same forest. In a flash I knew where I had seen the rest of the mangled scroll. We were in a tall, ramshackle, and dingy wooden schoolhouse in



FIGURE 8. FOREST LANDSCAPE, EARLY TENTH CENTURY(?)  
Courtesy of the Royal Academy of Art



the Japanese quarter of Tientsin. An ex-emperor, temporarily eclipsed, was sitting beside me dressed in a light jersey and holding a tennis racket across his lap. Jumping to his feet he had leaned over my shoulder and pointed out "great-grandfather's seal" and "five times great-grandfather's handwriting." A hundred or so of the most important paintings were all he had time to fetch with him in his hurried dash from the Peking palace, and I had been permitted to visit them between tennis games. Piccadilly, the dilapidated Tientsin schoolhouse, and the unforgettable fragments of a severed painting came suddenly to fit, mechanically precise. Perhaps that tangled wood of antique trees, and two or three more paintings here, actually date from the Sung dynasty before 1126 when the treacherous Chins moved down to drive the Sung court south of the Yangtse River. It was then that the Hsuan Ho Palace was destroyed and Hui Tsung's collection of six thousand "ancient and perfect paintings" were burned.

One cannot buy photographs of everything. Some that one particularly needs have not yet been made, and others are so popular that they have been bought out. Still others fail to give the desired effect. There is, however, one painting in particular (Figure 8) you must not miss even though the illustration may mangle it. I believe it to be early, possibly even before the middle of the tenth century. Certainly we can detect here a close echo of the style of that time, though the thing is surpassingly fresh and lovely and, even today, looks like a mapled Vermont hillside in the fall. This is not the terrible grandeur of an American sun on autumn leaves, but it is near dusk and with an unseen haze between. The gold and tan and faded green and russet patches are formally laid on over a net of wire-drawn twigs that support the foliage. On closer view one holds one's breath, for two great stags and five does are present in that very wood. They are clad in dun and white and their outlines are of amazing elegance. The doe who has twisted about to bite her flank has a spine, for all its suppleness, that will straighten rigid at the sound of a breaking twig.

On Sunday I saw Landseer's "Monarch of the Glen" at Ken Wood and perforce admired it. But today I have been in the very forest with these two stags and their harem and I am nearer to a real comprehension of the great deer's place in Nature.

Technically the picture is a puzzler. If it were painted much after the middle of the tenth century we must revise all our ideas on the changing styles in Chinese art. For there is no trace here of what we believe to have been Sung dynasty brushwork. It is everywhere wire-line and flat tones. Summoning



FIGURE 8a. DETAIL OF PAINTING ON FACING PAGE

"The doe who has twisted about to bite her flank . . ."  
Courtesy of the Royal Academy of Art

up all my imaginative powers, I cannot conceive that this was produced during a generation familiar with the Sung spread of ink and the use of twisting, flattening brush, that had become edge and surface and bulk all in the same deft flick. The Zen point of view with its elisions and its paradox and its esoteric hints was still in the future. This is of the ancient aristocratic tradition of T'ang before the Sung intellectuals were born.

One splendid painting (ascribed to Tung Yuan, end of the tenth century) has been skied, and the electric light glistens blindingly





FIGURE 9  
MA YUAN(?):  
FLOATING BY  
MOONLIGHT

Courtesy of the  
Royal Academy of Art



FIGURE 10. BOAT AND PAVILION, SUNG DYNASTY

Lent by Mr. Nezu. Courtesy of the Royal Academy of Art





FIGURE 11. TIAO KUANG-YIN: SPRING SNOW (TENTH CENTURY)

Courtesy of the Royal Academy of Art

from its glass. But, judging from what one can catch, it must be one of the great specimens in the show. If we had Mr. Abe's two magnificent examples of that master and the magic scroll from Boston to compare, we should be able to arrive at some conclusion about it. Meantime all that one can say is that the rocks are of a strange green hue that is unfamiliar but that certainly does not suggest a later period.

It is very much to the credit of members of the Committee that they have included so few paintings ascribed to Ma Yuan (d. 1224?). For he is perhaps the most copied artist of all the Sungs, and Burlington House must have been embarrassed by refusing a score or more of his more or less doubtful works. The splendid "Boating by Moonlight"

(Figure 9) formerly of the Eumorfopoulos collection, is still ascribed with much probability to him and is grander and more serene than most. Perhaps the fact that it lacks many of the hall marks that we ascribe to Ma Yuan—except the three-cornered composition—is a real advantage to it. The three men in the boat come poling through the ripples while high, very high, at the picture's top the shoulder of a hill juts out of haze that is illumined by the moon.

Figure 10, sent from Japan by Mr. Nezu, and unasccribed, must be another of the true examples of Sung times. You can see by the illustration that it has been cut down but is none the less a noble composition of a boat and a grand pavilion. It is peopled with beings that really live however ill-equipped



we may be fully to grasp their significance.

Out of the half-dozen most important album paintings, I have mentioned only one and that was but a fragment of a longer scroll, the rest of which is to be found today in Manchukuo. But there is another (Figure 11) as clear as those woods are somber, ascribed to Tiao Kuang-yin of the tenth century. It shows the muffling wet snows of spring fallen untimely on a craggy garden rock at the base of which orchises are already in flower. The whole thing would melt at a touch and the somber snowfall would clear at a breath or a gleam of the April sun that seems just to have left the picture. It has, curiously enough, something of the feeling recaptured by the Chinese color prints of similar subjects in the eighteenth century.

The discerning critic is supposed to be able to stand at the safe distance of six and a half hundred years, and in a hemisphere remote, and to be able to detect the very first decay of Sung art. He must attribute certain paintings to the precise eighty-eight years called the

Yuan dynasty. I confess that unless a picture has been signed and dated by a known artist whose life falls precisely within that period and unless it seems, into the bargain, to be perfectly Sung, I should never venture to call it Yuan. There are of course certain marks of the transition stage between recognizable extremes, and those perhaps may be labeled Yuan Style for want of a better name. Evidently that is what the members of the Committee meant when they said those succulent "Autumn Melons" (Figure 12) were "probably Yuan." As a matter of fact they may be that, or they may be a century and half removed into the great days of Ming. If the latter is the case it is a fine example of our reluctance to admit the splendors of, say, fourteenth-century painting.

"Indifferent to Cold and Snow" by Yen Hui of the fourteenth century, is as sound a picture as one could find in any period. The splintered brush stroke is of course not sober Sung, it is the work of a virtuoso. So too is the trick by which a background tint is layed



FIGURE 12. AUTUMN MELONS, PROBABLY YUAN

Courtesy of the Royal Academy of Art

in after the drawing is finished and is spaced by a feather's edge of white from the ink line.

The South Sung Academy obligingly moved north to the Mongol capital of Peking in 1267, and its great days were over perhaps within a century. But not so with Chinese painting in general, for there were painters to come who were nearly as skilled as any Sung master and more original than any—and whose works lacked nothing the Sung had except perhaps penetralia and sober depths of feeling. Now was the time for brush strokes, for color, for tricks and twists and ingenuities, for calligraphy run riot, for forgeries and copies and for archaeologizing. We in the West have no conception of a huge bulk of great painting that has always been admired by orientals for craftsmanship as great as any. The names of Ming painters unheard of by us are household words with them. We are blindest of all when it comes to the work of the *Wen jen hua*—the literary painters. They were amateurs to whom words and brush strokes, sketches and poems, were confessedly not to be distinguished. If a man were poet and philosopher, and was cultivated enough to have achieved an elegant handwriting, let him sketch his ideal scenes and put a poem on the same paper alongside.

In fairness to them it must be said that we have historical evidence that the best of these men did not usually take their own work too seriously. But their successors do so, and hence our western puzzle about it all. We do our scholarly best to admire "the most accomplished wearer of gardenias in his generation." By the seventeenth century the cult had become actually classical in its respectability, and the College of Heralds (the historians of art) had dug up a whole series of ancestors for it. Mi Fei, with his grand

smudged blacks in Sung times was reputed to be its grandfather, but it is extremely doubtful if it can claim any greater antiquity than the earliest Ming pupil of Ni Tsang. But there is much in all this that we get real profit from. For, until we can share something of the eighteenth-century Chinese and Japanese comprehension of the literary paintings, we cannot claim scholarship or a proper enjoyment of Chinese art. The present grand show—in which it is true one or two Wangs are exhibited—would amaze the Chinese collectors today for its seeming neglect of some of their grand names. This, however, was not really neglect on the part of the Committee, but was largely because pictures of the sort I speak of are never fetched out except on specific request.

Now I should like to examine piece by piece a dozen great pictures and knotty problems—the Wu Chi sparrows that can't be distinguished from a Japanese painting on Japanese paper (Figure 13)—the grand landscape from Cleveland attributed to Mi Fei or his son which is so obviously finer than the other painting attributed to him here, and many other things that need going into. But the Magazine has not the space nor have I the learning.

In closing let me urge you to come to London before the exhibition ends in March. It is an experience of a lifetime for any westerner however much or little he may know about Chinese painting. If he knows so much as to be disagreeable he will miss a few treasures but find a score of new ones. At any rate he will do well to remember that the English have done, and done handsomely, what we Americans have always talked about doing. They have collected by far the most important exhibition of Chinese art in history.

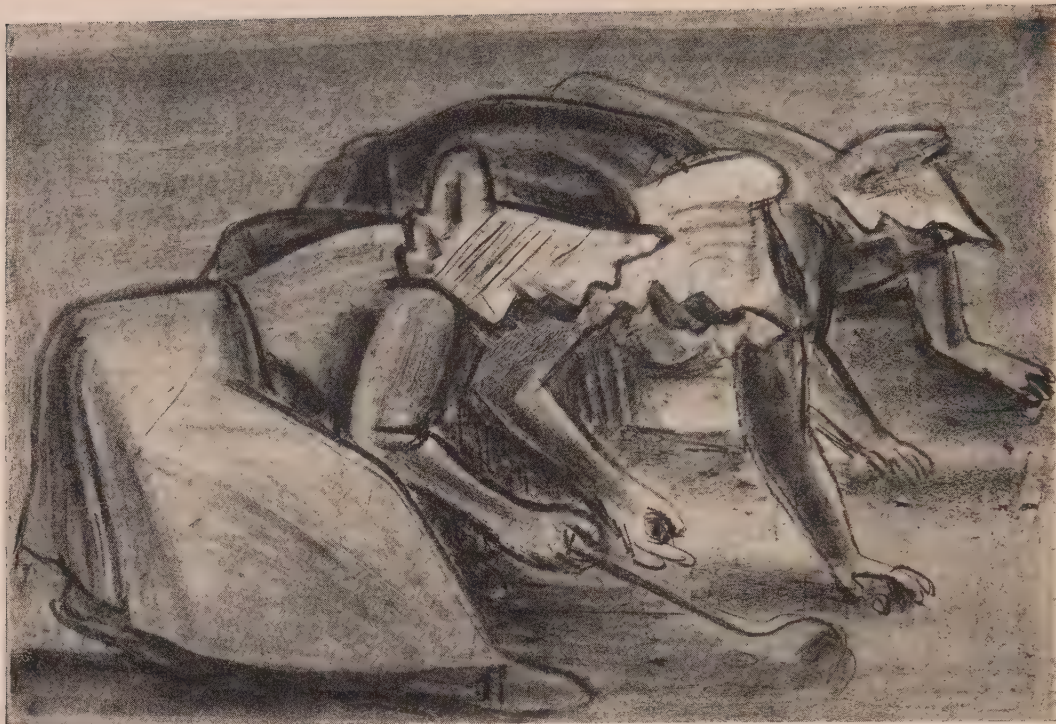
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FIGURE 13. WU CHI: SPARROWS

Courtesy of the Royal Academy of Art







ADOLF DEHN: POMERANIAN POTATO DIGGERS (1927)

Courtesy E. Weyhe Galleries

## ADOLF DEHN

By ERNEST BRACE

IT IS a long way from Waterville, Minnesota, to the rue Blondel. The distance may be measured more accurately in terms of experience than in miles. Almost instinctively one making the journey for the first time attempts to estimate the contrast in human values under the moral debit and credit columns of good and bad. The individual who is capable of stepping from the provincial to the meretricious without either self-righteousness or the swagger of naïve sophistication is rare. Only an enormous appetite for human existence in all its phases can preserve the balance. So many small-town art students have found Paris, as viewed from the local church pulpits, an answer to their revolt against smugness, an ideal of freedom that eventually, of course, became as oppressive as the self-righteous gossip they had fled. Others, having passed along the

street, shuddered and hurried home to enjoy the fireside comfort of moral superiority. Adolf Dehn, though he could comment incisively on what he saw, has too much zest for living either to stifle his impressions with an affectation of superior worldliness or to take refuge in moral or aesthetic precepts.

Naturally I do not use Minnesota and the rue Blondel to imply any connotation of direction in Dehn's career as an artist, but rather to indicate the remarkable scope of his subject matter and his avid interest in the world about him. More frequently than painters, those who work in black and white seem to tend toward specialization in their choice of subject-matter. Those who have made a success with caricature or social comment, for example, seldom show any interest in landscape. But Dehn is as much at ease along a creek in Minnesota as he is in Harlem or at



the opera. His figures are as alive and human as his trees are stately and gracefully upreaching. Each of his drawings or lithographic prints is an affirmation of something he likes or of an emotion that something visual has stirred in him. And he is interested in a great many things: people, whether they happen to have come out of the economic mill starving, or with a pekinese under each arm, the vastness of sea and mountains, the almost idyllic intimacy of farmyards and winding streams, Brooklyn bridge, factories, grain elevators, Niagara Falls, Chartres. And the list gives only a hint of the universality of his interests. He has never been in want of subject-matter, and he holds no theories to limit his choice.

Waterville, Minnesota, where Dehn was born and where his German grandparents had originally settled, is a small village not far from Minneapolis, in which city he first studied art. The group of students with which he became associated must have been an earnest and a singularly alive one. Certainly it

has contributed richly to contemporary art. Among the students who were at school with him were Wanda Gag, Harry Gottlieb, and Arnold and Lucile Blanch. Dehn, with a background of German revolt against the monarchical repression of the fatherland was, at least in so far as social ideas were concerned, the leader of this group. The war scattered it, and the war put its non-conforming idealism to the test. Dehn, as he phrases it, was "stubborn," and the days of the war were lonely and bitter ones for him. In New York he studied at the Art Students' League and also did enough odd jobs to provide himself with food and shelter. It was natural, considering his rebellion and the type of work to which he was turning, that Boardman Robinson should have had a strong influence upon him. In style and viewpoint Dehn's drawings paid tribute to Robinson's work, but emotionally he needed no one to point the way. After New York and the Art Students' League, he joined the artistic exodus to Europe in 1921, and there he lived for the greater



ADOLF DEHN: CENTRAL PARK AT NIGHT (1934)

The reproduction was made from a trial proof. Courtesy E. Weyhe Galleries



ADOLF DEHN: WITH GOD AT CHARTRES (1928)  
Courtesy E. Weyhe Galleries



part of a decade. In his case, however, it was the development of his almost exclusive interest in lithography as much, at least, as pleasant living and a greater politeness to things aesthetic, that kept him in Europe. The cost of procuring stones and having them printed and ground would have been almost prohibitive at home, and, moreover, at that time home printing was dishearteningly inferior.

The soft, velvety texture and the immaculate whiteness of a freshly ground lithographic stone is sensuously appealing even to one whose experience with drawing has been limited to absent-minded sketches on blotters and odd scraps of paper. One feels that on such a surface one's pencil would move with almost automatic skill. It is therefore not difficult to understand the irresistible appeal such a medium must have had—and still has—for such a sensuously aware draftsman as Adolf Dehn. With ever-increasing sureness and authority he has lavished upon hundreds of stones his feeling for the form and texture of objects. Whatever the variety of his subject-matter, whether it be cosmopolitan or bucolic, the invariable mark of his work is his sure understanding of the tactile qualities of his subjects. And working as he does, employing any technical device or accident which may serve his purpose and intent upon nuances of shade and pattern, the expertness of the printing often determines the ruin or success of his work. He has explored the possibilities of his medium as thoroughly as he has the social and natural manifestations of the world in which he lives.

Although errors may sometimes offer new technical suggestions to the artist exploring his craft and eager to broaden to its fullest extent all its possibilities of expression, there is no process that demands more exacting skill and care than lithography. An inadvertent brushing of a fingertip against the stone, a breath, even, may leave a smudge, not apparent in the drawing, that will in the print reveal itself as a disfiguring daub. The apparent freedom of Dehn's lithographs shows how thoroughly he has mastered his technique. The richness of his tones, their precision, and their infinite range are the result of his synthesis of skill and creative imagina-

tion. From the more sombre and less sensitively varied tones of his early lithographs he has developed a scope that is essential to the universality of his subject matter.

While Dehn's satire can become as scathing and as bitter as that of George Grosz, he is able at times to forget all about social injustice and to lose himself completely in the quiet, almost idyllic countryside of "Back in Minnesota" or the calm, gentle sweep of "Menemsha Village." His feeling for nature has a nostalgic quality that sets it apart from the rest of his work. Here is something in the past, something returned to, perhaps, but still something remembered and longed for and softened by intimate thought. Such pictures seem the obverse to his bitterness, the contrast that gives it impetus. In his work as a whole, nature and humanity represent two opposing forces, the one softly gentle, the other bestial or ridiculous or merely animal. There is nothing unreal in his landscapes, they are not merely sentimental; but when man—or, more often, woman—enters the picture we are suddenly confronted with all the grim perversity of reality. We feel as if we had been on a long vacation at the mountains or the seashore and were back in the city again taking our first ride on the subway. Later, as we look at "Central Park at Night" or "Brooklyn Bridge," we discover that the city has its more inspiring aspects, too, perhaps more deeply vital than the longed-for countryside. And sometimes, as in "Rain on Place Chatelet," where man and nature come together, it is the gentler mood that predominates. The dark figures are obscured in the warm, mysteriously shrouding rain. Done in 1928, this is both technically and expressively one of the finest of his earlier lithographs. Here authority and understanding definitely emerge from his more tentative experiments.

The lyrical quality of Dehn's landscapes by no means implies that he has any desire for a permanent return to nature. Quite the contrary, for it is the crowded, dramatic aspect of cities that attracts him most. He talks pleasantly, amusingly of his visits home in Minnesota or of a summer at Cape Cod, but in describing a brawl he happened on late one night under the elevated in Brook-

lyn, his excitement stirred him to quick gesture and vivid phraseology. A crowd of negroes had gathered about two women of their race who were fighting and screaming and clawing in the gutter. He elaborated the scene graphically, the detached interest of the onlookers, the shadowy setting under the street lamps, under the elevated, the rumble of the trains, the squalid street, and the final disentangling of the embattled trulls by two men who apparently had personal interest in them. Eventually the memory of that event will become a lithograph, for it has the qualities which interest him above all others, a certain frank earthiness, dramatic movement, living form and color.

But the sources of his subject-matter are not all factual. Besides the world he sees, he has a vigorous imagination and a pervading sense of humor to draw upon. Recently he has been doing a series of six drawings

showing the outstanding events in the day of an overstuffed female who seems anxious only to prove the theory of conspicuous waste. Through all of her ordeals her two pomegraniums follow her. We see her in her bath, having her coffee, the two poms peering anxiously over the edge of the tub; later at a fitting and having a permanent wave and dubiously eating a banana, while the delicate fingers of the chiropodist and the manicurist work upon her pinkly curling fingers and toes. In short, followed by her faithful dogs, she endures a harrowing day to emerge serene and completely decorated in the final picture which shows her seated in the front row of the audience—with a seat reserved for each pom—at a lecture by John Strachey. The set of drawings has skilful and intelligent humor. From the pose of the tiniest finger-tip to the expression on madame's face, each line is an effective and integrated part of the mood.



ADOLF DEHN: SUNSET OVER CUTTYHUNK (1934)

Courtesy E. Weyhe Galleries





ADOLF DEHN: ART LOVERS (1934)

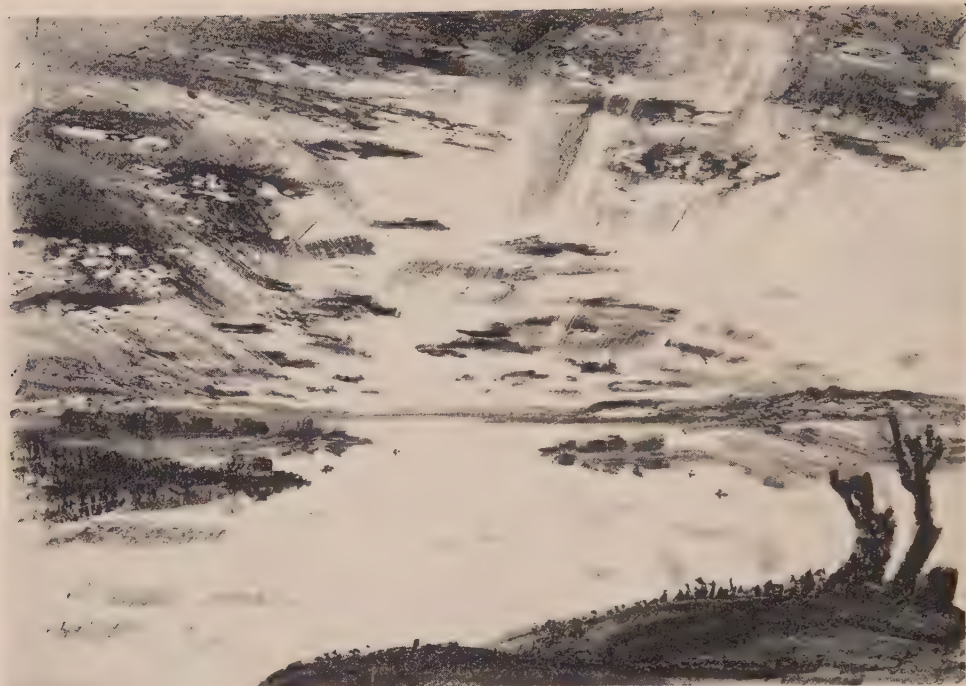
Courtesy E. Weyhe Galleries

The sardonic comment upon which the series is based is always controlled and made forceful through implication rather than banal statement.

Less playful in their malice are such pieces as "Frankie and Johnnie in Paris," "All for a Piece of Meat," and "With God at Chartres." The latter shows a group of peasant choir boys, and their clustered heads are a study in cretinism. He tells of seeing them during an impressive service at the cathedral and of his fascination with this glimpse of earthy reality behind the pomp and circumstance of the awe-inspiring ritual. Dehn's bitterest social comments all have this same suggestion of a glimpse behind the surface glamor of some manifestation of exultation or gaiety. His tourists in Paris along the rue Blondel or in Harlem have for a moment let down their masks and revealed the latent viciousness; the girls have, for the instant, become tired or frantically tawdry. But there is no suggestion in these scenes that the artist is pointing a stern, didactic finger. They are

too vitally alive, too exciting for that. There is no bloodless warning against the flesh and the devil but rather a vivid recreation of the strange frenzy of such spectacles and their movement and color.

In discussing such subject-matter one hears, or imagines, echoes of the old cry: but why choose such scenes when there are so many pleasant, or at least less distasteful things in the world? The question would seem to imply that it is the function of the artist merely to prove how pretty girls or mountains or flowers can be and that man is not really so vile as lots of men are. Thus beauty is confused with perfection, thought with day-dreaming. Actually the artist who in a tense, incisive flash of perception is able to create the essence of reality, gives us, regardless of the subject-matter, a form of beauty that has and should have nothing to do with prettiness or escape from daily living. Just as doing must always be more important and more significant than wishing, so the attempt to give meaning to actual experience must always



ADOLF DEHN: MINNESOTA SUNSET (1931)  
 Courtesy E. Weyhe Galleries

ADOLF DEHN: PLACE CHATELET, PARIS (1928)  
 Courtesy E. Weyhe Galleries





be more profoundly moving than any pining for earthly paradise. Some of Dehn's finest work is, superficially, the most horrible. In addition to the movement and the arresting composition and the color sense in such a lithograph as, say, "Frankie and Johnnie in Paris," there is a keenness of observation and an unequivocal statement that infuses the picture with vigorous life. One who turns away from it as the mere reproduction of a dissolute scene had best give up and confine his interest in art to the advertising section of the popular magazine. Dehn has no sterilized food or beauty lotion to offer.

His emotional range is as broad as his choice of subject-matter. From his "Art Lovers" pointing their sharp noses on the scent of culture or pompously and defensively connoisseurish, through such scenes as his "Stuyvesant Park," moonlit and mysterious in its velvety tones, or his "Central Park at Night," and across the landscape of Minnesota to the streets of Paris, he has given us not only a varied panorama of places and people but a comprehensive record of an individual's emotional experiences. His interested gaze seems to reject nothing and his unflagging zest seldom allows him to be content with mere reproduction. His own emo-

tions, his personal likes and dislikes seem always to have guided him in his way of working and his choice of material. He has never fitted into any of the precise categories of modern art, and today he refuses to subject his work to any theory, whether it happens to be aesthetic or social.

The ultimate explanation of his art, of course, lies in the man himself. Both as an artist and as a person he shows an unusual lack of reticence. If he likes a thing he expresses his liking without hesitating to consider whether someone may consider his taste old-fashioned or naïve. His ideas and his work are his own and never those of some theoretical public or group. He seems to have little need for either reserve or evasion. His attitude is affirmative rather than critical, and he likes to laugh. Because he lives and works with expansive physical gusto and is conscious of no necessity for morally perverting his instincts, his hatred seems always to focus upon some manifestation of the ingrowing: greed in all its aspects from the carnal to the pecuniary, pomposity, and the like. In short, as his work indicates, Dehn's is a creative personality. He has contributed richly to contemporary art without ever borrowing its dogmas to supply him with faith.



ADOLF DEHN:  
A LITTLE JOKE

Courtesy  
E. Weyhe Galleries

# BRIDGES

By ALLEN TUCKER

IN LOOKING at different painters, different countries, different times, we find a variety in the means of expression. A variety of technique, of course, but far more than that, a variety in the stress put upon this or that essential of design. Some men stress line, some mass, some color, some form, some color pattern, some a pattern in dark and light.

Painting is a craft. A picture is a thing made, existing physically, but this craft is a means not an end. It is a craft so complicated that many people regard it as an end in itself. Further the ends are so entangled in the means that they are hard to separate and as means are always easier to understand than ends, so we take the least troublesome way and study, talk about, and practice the means with but slight interest in the ends for which the means exist.

We may regard each man's means as a bridge that he builds to get himself from this world of actuality to the land of reality—that land of mystery and wonder that we call Art.

Each man builds his own bridge, not always conscious himself where it is going to end, but if in this man there is the understanding vision and he builds his bridge straight and in sincerity, it will reach the land of life and be strong enough to enable him to recross it, bringing us pieces of his experience with the infinite.

Some painters build elaborate bridges, covered with carving, heavy with ornament, putting so much time on the bridge that the bridge is never finished and stops short before it reaches across.

Some men build bridges and, losing their sense of direction, the bridge gets bent and

returns on itself so that always the man walks out on his bridge and then finds himself back where he started with nothing in his hand.

Some bridges are so intricate, so skillfully wrought, that we are lost in looking at them and think only of the bridge, forgetting that a bridge is meant to take a man somewhere and enable him to return.

Some bridges are so strange to us, so different from bridges we have seen, that we won't believe that they can hold or that the man has really crossed on them and brought back to us the gold of the imagination.

Other bridges are such careful copies of the great bridges of the past that we think they must surely have got across, and so easily believe that the dross the painter brings to us is gold and not just the mortar and chips of stone that he has picked from the nearby bridge of his predecessor.

Some men can get only a single wire across; we cannot think that they will be able to cross and bring back anything of value and yet over those precarious swinging strands have been carried some of the most poignant thoughts that have ever moved mankind.

The very great painters build strong, splendid bridges—the bridge itself secure, crossing the water on wide arches. And over these bridges the great men walk firmly without fatigue and reaching the other side are able to penetrate far into the land, gathering in the far-reaching mountains such visions, such life, such ultimate reality that when they, walking firmly on their great bridges, bring the treasure back, generations of groping men are enabled somewhat to understand the mystery that we call by the names birth, life, death, destiny.





DUCCIO: THE TEMPTATION OF CHRIST (TEMPERA PANEL)

Copyrighted Photograph Courtesy the Frick Collection

## EXHIBITION REVIEWS

By E. M. BENSON

### IN THE NATURE OF A GIFT—THE FRICK COLLECTION

DISCOURTEOUS as it may be to look so excellent a gift-horse in the mouth, the motives that "inspired" the late Henry Clay Frick's "gift to the nation," as well as the many obstacles and restrictions which make its enjoyment difficult, are of such a nature as to invite criticism. Obviously it is not in the public interest to restrict admission to week-days from ten to four when most able-bodied

citizens are at work. Nor is it in the public interest to so display works of art that visitors are prevented from coming within a friendly distance of them.

Although this objection applies to less than a third of the total number of subjects in the collection—the remainder being exhibited under more favorable conditions in several adjoining galleries—included in this minority group are many of the Frick's finest examples: the Titians and Holbeins, El Greco's "St. Jerome" and Giovanni Bellini's "St. Francis

in Ecstasy." They are all roped off from the public in what was once the Frick living room and is now a model for interior decorators with a Park Avenue trade.

The collection itself is in many ways so unusual that any hindrance to its fullest enjoyment is doubly regrettable. It consists mainly of paintings—the official count is one hundred and thirty-six—all but two of which, a Renoir, and a Manet, are on exhibition. In terms of quantity representation the English, Dutch, and French run nip and tuck for first place. Of the thirteen Italian paintings the earliest is by Duccio, the latest by Tiepolo. Among the Flemish, Van Dyck rings up a score of eight monumental paintings (monu-

mental in size rather than quality) and Gheeraert David one. El Greco, Velasquez, and Goya speak for Spain. Gilbert Stuart and Whistler for America. Holbein grimly holds the fort for Germany.

A sharp line might be drawn between those pictures in the collection which seem to reflect the personal taste of Mr. Frick and those which—well, you can't have an important collection without a Rembrandt, a Vermeer, a Chardin, a Fragonard, a Veronese, and so on. Mr. Frick, it appears, had a weakness for the salon portrait, the kind that Van Dyck so competently manufactured for anyone who could pay his price. This may explain the presence in the collection not only of the



GIOVANNI BELLINI: ST. FRANCIS IN ECSTASY (OIL)

Copyrighted Photograph Courtesy the Frick Collection





TITIAN: PIETRO ARÉTINO (OIL)  
Copyrighted Photograph Courtesy the Frick Collection



REMBRANDT: THE POLISH RIDER (OIL)  
Copyrighted Photograph Courtesy the Frick Collection

numerous Van Dycks, but of four undistinguished full-length portraits by Whistler, and a profusion of portraits of varying degrees of quality by British painters of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The walls of the Frick dining room, for example, are elegantly clothed with portraits, by Hoppner, Romney, and Gainsborough; the library with Hogarth's "Miss Mary Edwards," a portrait of unusual excellence and far superior to the Gainsborough and skin-you-love-to-touch Lawrence that keep it company.

While we are on the subject of British portraiture, we might consider the Reynolds and Raeburns that hang in the large main gallery. Reynolds, to judge from the two portraits by him in the collection, had a

technical mastery of his craft which few men of his day possessed. He brought everything to his canvas—but life. At his worst he was dextrous but dull, his colors muddy, and his human observation superficial. At his best he was a pedestrian Fleet Street Rembrandt. Whatever one might say of him, he was never a gigolo to the nobility, as were Hoppner, Romney, and Lawrence. The case of Raeburn, painter to the Scottish gentry, is somewhat different. He painted pictures for profit, but he did a forthright job that was at the same time both banal and ingratiating. His portrait of "Mrs. Cruikshank," though partially a sop to the sitter, has a freshness of paint surface and liveness of touch which I find much more satisfying than most of Sir Joshua's handiwork. Inspiration, however,





VERMEER: MISTRESS AND MAID SERVANT (OIL)

Copyrighted Photograph Courtesy the Frick Collection



EL GRECO: ST. JEROME (OIL)

Copyrighted Photograph Courtesy the Frick Collection





VERONESE:  
THE CHOICE  
OF HERCULES  
(OIL)

Copyrighted  
Photograph  
Courtesy the  
Frick  
Collection

was a commodity in which these men did not deal. For that rare distillate we must go to Gainsborough, Constable, and Turner who, with the exception of Constable, are more than adequately represented at the Frick, and to Crome and Wilson who should be here, but aren't.

The rest of the material in the Frick collection is, with very few exceptions, of prime importance both aesthetically and historically. Among the Dutch, Rembrandt and Vermeer easily carry off the honors, each being represented by three pictures that roughly corre-

spond to as many phases of their artistic development. Rembrandt's "The Polish Rider," (1650) one of two equestrian pictures that are credited to him, and a "Portrait of Himself" (1658) painted eleven years before his death, serve to reaffirm this artist's stature as the greatest of all plastic analysts of human character, his own included, who has appeared outside of Italy since the Renaissance. It has often been said of Rembrandt—I have been guilty of saying it myself—that when he works in oil rather than in some graphic medium he rarely composes his pictures in



HOGARTH:  
MISS MARY  
EDWARDS  
(OIL)

Copyrighted  
Photograph  
Courtesy the  
Frick  
Collection

deep space. That is largely true, but it does not mean that he is not a master of composition. For him the surface of the canvas is to the forms on it what the heart is to the bloodstream. It is a depot from which all things radiate and to which they inevitably return.

Vermeer, unlike Rembrandt, composes in deep space and does it magnificently. The reason for this is that Vermeer is a colorist working with a wide range of color relationships. Rembrandt's relationships are plastic rather than, as in the case of Vermeer, harmonic. An equivalent difference exists between the Goyas in the Frick collection (two

portraits and a large canvas, "The Forge") and Chardin's "Lady with a Bird-Organ"; between the luminous and quite extraordinary impastic landscape, "Dieppe," by the Barbizonite, Daubigny, and Degas' "Rehearsal" or "The Choice of Hercules" by Veronese. The artist who is the colorist and works in harmonic relationships is free to employ the representational form because his color, which is the abstract element of construction for him, is able to carry this literal notation without injuring the fluid pattern of his picture. On the other hand, the Rembrandt or the Goya would, by doing the same thing, run



the risk of destroying the core of subjective unity he is attempting to create.

In Piero della Francesca and Uccello, we often get the ideal marriage of both approaches, as we do also in Titian and El Greco in their large group figure-paintings. Neither the Titians nor the El Grecos at the Frick quite fall into this category. Of the two Titians, one is an early romantic portrait in the Giorgione manner; the other, the portrait of "Pietro Aretino," father of yellow journalism, is the more substantial contribution. Humanly it is neither as searching nor as profound as the Rembrandt self-portrait, but its color values are considerably richer and more varied. Titian is a less climactic dramatist than Rembrandt, but, on the whole, as persuasive. El Greco is in some ways more mannered than Titian, but he is also a more inventive colorist and picture designer. The two oils by El Greco at the Frick are important examples of his art. The smaller "Expulsion from the Temple" is one of many variations on the same theme. This picture clearly reveals the extent to which El Greco could work in miniature, making use of both drawing and painting in building his forms. His triangular "St. Jerome as a Cardinal," painted during his Italian period, offers us an equally significant key to his color development. The olive-green of the background is a color which we more readily associate with van Gogh than a Renaissance painter, and is no less startling each time we come upon it in El Greco.

From the art student's point of view, and also the art historian's, the *pièces de resistances* of the Frick collection are undoubtedly the Duccio and Giovanni Bellini; from the angle of general public interest, attested by the crowds that gather there, the Fragonard and Boucher rooms. Duccio's "Temptation of Christ" scarcely requires my endorsement to affirm its importance in the history of art. It is, as every textbook on the subject will tell you, a significant halfway house between Byzantium and the Renaissance. It occurred to me, as I was examining this small, exquisite tempera panel, that the persons who all too readily acknowledge the formal beauty of such a work as this without even attempting

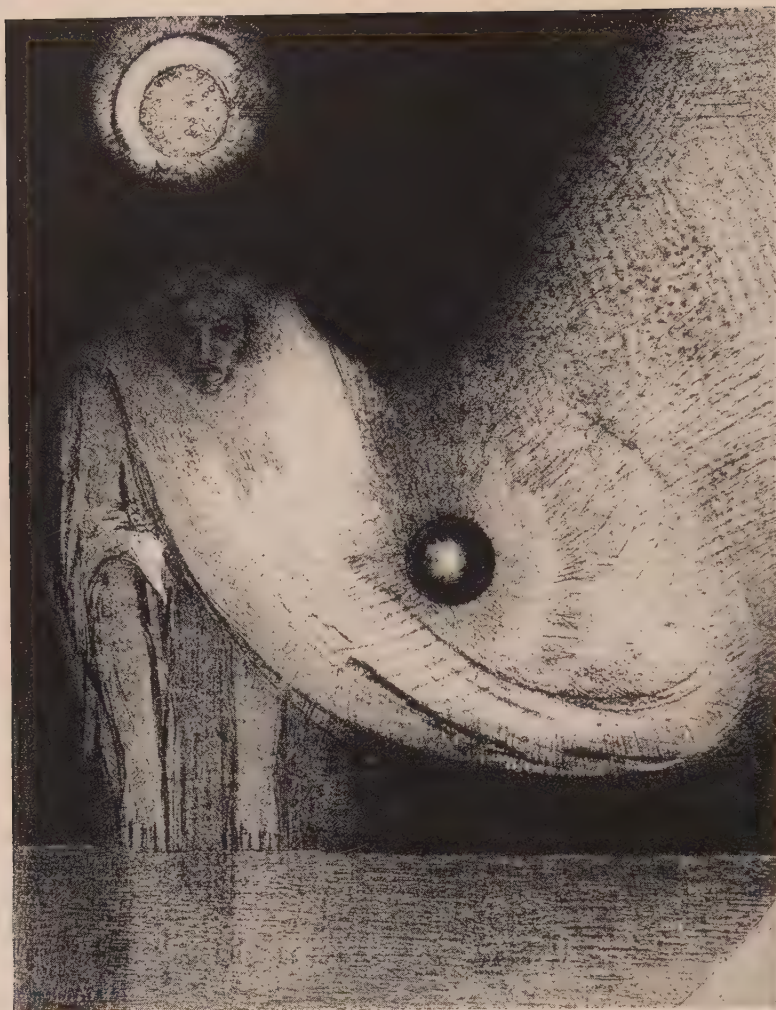
to unravel its iconography, are the very individuals who are heard to complain that Peter Blume's Carnegie prize-winning picture, "South of Scranton" (or is it East?) is unintelligible. Well, maybe it is. But it seems to me that Blume's art, esoteric and ambiguous as his symbolism may be, seems nearer in spirit to the art of Duccio, Giovanni Bellini, and Carpaccio than it is to the School of Paris; and that a better understanding of their work would help to create a more sympathetic audience for artists who, like Blume, are trying intelligently to absorb the traditions of western art. To that end I invite my readers to pay a friendly visit to the Duccio and Giovanni Bellini at the Frick.

Nor will you want to slight Fragonard and Boucher, though their art may seem somewhat decadent by comparison. The Fragonards—a series of eleven mural panels—are so much expert and succulent *chi-chi* made to order for Madame du Barry but refused by her. The Bouchers—several brilliant oil sketches of putti, a series of eight decorative panels, and a set of four pictures illustrating "The Seasons"—show what fine painting talent went to waste on subjects which seem so absurd to us today that they carry a surrealistic flavor. I am inclined to think that the late Mr. Frick may have found these two rooms more stimulating than his Duccio and Bellini. I suppose everyone should be free to have his profane as well as his sacred moments.

Discussion of the Frick's large and important collection of limoges enamels and sculptures is reserved for the near future when photographs of this material are available for reproduction.

#### CERAMIC SCULPTURE BY AITKEN AT THE WALKER GALLERIES

RUSSELL BARNETT AITKEN, as testified by his recent exhibition at the newly opened Walker Galleries, is a born wit with a natural gift for the trade he plies. He has drawn on more sources than you can shake a stick at—Wiener (Werkstätte) baroque, superrealism, etc.—everything in fact that he could lay his hands on. But the end product is a brand



ODILON REDON:  
LE BUDDHA  
(LITHOGRAPH)

Courtesy C. W. Kraushaar  
Art Galleries

new substance and as American in flavor as Virginia ham or Barnum and Bailey's circus. No one but an American could have produced such a galaxy of ceramic belly laughs, ("Grade A," "Hollywood Hero," etc.). "Godiva" as a Negress riding a zebra saddle-wise and "Leda" as a chorine redhead with a duck expiring at her feet—are too good to be true. Aitken has his more serious vein too. "Futility of a Well-Ordered Life" is a lady with clocks for breasts and an urn in her abdomen. And as a craftsman Aitken handles his job with ingenuity and skill. He promises to be one of America's master *kleinkunst* makers. More power to him.

#### PRINTS FROM NEAR AND FAR

IT WOULD seem that prints blossom best in the winter to judge by the bumper crops that begin to flood the art marts and exhibition palaces along in December. The Downtown Gallery ushered out the old year with its ninth annual exhibition of The American Printmakers. No great change has taken place since the previous year either in subject matter or quality. Cikovsky is still the poet of the jobless. Charlot is still way down yonder in Mexico although his official residence happens to be New York City. The same goes for Howard Cook. Harry Sternberg's Michaelangelesque nudes make a nice



pattern on paper, but the symbolism is nebulous and not too profound. Reginald Marsh and Emil Ganso give us (what again!) the inside stuff on burlesque shows and strip dancers. And so on. The story has a happy ending. The prints were reasonably priced—all except the best ones of course.

Shortly after Père Noël paid us his annual visit the C. W. Kraushaar Art Galleries staged a show of prints by Europeans and Americans that attracted far less attention than it deserved. It contained some first-rate material. John Sloan, lest you forget, is still a finer etcher of the New York scene than most of his disciples. A Bellows' "Self-Portrait" lithograph reminds us that this fellow knew what he was after and often hit his mark. Then there are those "furriners"—



RUSSELL BARNETT AITKEN: LEDA  
Ceramic Sculpture. Courtesy Walker Galleries



ERNST LUDWIG KIRCHNER: PORTRAIT  
SCHAMES

Woodcut lent by J. B. Neumann to the Brooklyn  
Museum Exhibition

Gericault and Delacroix whose etchings are on my preferred list along with Pissarro's, a lithograph by Rouault, not one of his best but a good one, and the cream of the exhibited lithos, a Redon that goes by the name of "Le Buddha" and carries an inscription from Gustave Flaubert which reads: "They led me into the schools. I knew more than the professors." Black was a color for Redon and he knew how to make it sing. This is a rare print and one of Redon's best. It belongs on someone's wall.

By slow degrees we've come around to the small but discriminately assembled show of Contemporary European Woodcuts at the Brooklyn Museum. The German prints were

especially fine. But then the Germans have been master woodcutters for many centuries. It is fallacious, I think, to assume as many do, that the typical German woodcut is stark, introvert, and forbidding like Nolde's "Prophet." Even among Nolde's own works in this medium it is possible to find any number of subjects that are handled with as much grace and sensibility as a Renoir might be capable of. The art of Franz Marc, for example, could hardly be characterized as German in the sense that the term is generally interpreted. There is nothing Gothic or transcendental about his two abstract animal woodcuts, included in the Brooklyn exhibition. Kirchner, of course, is as different from Marc as Bavaria is from Dresden or Berlin. He is complex and problematic; a man of large physical appetites, sharp perceptions, and neurotic self-consuming contradictions. His "Portrait Schames" is a splendid piece of woodcutting. Except for the German prints, the rest of the show contains the usual group of Galanis, Valminck, Masereel, Manolo, etc., well-chosen examples, well worth renewing one's acquaintance with.

#### NEW PAINTINGS BY O'KEEFFE AT AN AMERICAN PLACE

I NEVER saw an O'Keeffe that reminded me of anything but O'Keeffe. Now, there are many O'Keeffes that say nothing to me. But I'm always compelled to respect the validity of what is there within the picture frame, just as I respect the validity of endives, although I don't enjoy eating them. Then there are other pictures that say a great deal to me. They don't remind me of anything either, except themselves. And the reason is that O'Keeffe, instead of being as terribly subjective as many claim she is, is really more objective than most of us realize. I don't mean to say that there's not a great deal of O'Keeffe in all her pictures. She painted them, didn't she? But she's like the wind. You don't see it, but you know its around by the effect it has on everything about you. That's the way I feel about many of the pictures that O'Keeffe brought back with her from New Mexico, particularly the landscapes.

I like them in a special way. You might call it a Platonic liking, but it's something more. I mean, they don't bowl me over. I like them as a mathematician is supposed to like his equations, when they're the right equations. They create an abstract fondness without exacting the kind of emotional pull one feels when one looks at an El Greco or Rembrandt. "Hill, New Mexico" does that to me. The pinks and whites of the hill against the sharp blue of the sky give me a detached pleasure, an abstract gratification. The effects are achieved without any technical showmanship. The scaffolding has all been cleared away. And what's left has in it something of the purity and also the formlessness of pre-Giottesque Italian landscapes.

Every once in a while O'Keeffe paints a picture like her "Turkey Feathers in Indian Pot" which is veristic to a painful degree. At the other end of the picture-making scale we have O'Keeffe's "Katchina" doll subjects, two of the happiest notes in the show and no less important because they are playful. To me they signify that O'Keeffe's good spirits and good health have been restored to her. The exhibition will continue through the month of February.

#### ALEXANDER BROOK IN A COMPREHENSIVE ONE-MAN SHOW

BROOK has more innate talent as a painter than he knows what to do with. That was the feeling carried away with me from his current show at the Downtown Gallery. He is constantly avoiding the really big problems of his art rather than attempting to solve them. He has a tendency to take the easiest way out at the very moment when he is about to come to grips with his material.

In "Peggy Bacon and Metaphysics," for example, he let the background lie fallow when it might have been used to integrate the figures in the picture area. As a result the figures, though brilliantly painted, need an accompaniment which they do not have. We notice the same brand of evasion in "Ann," a portrait of a half nude figure with her back to the spectator. There is some strong, rich painting in this canvas, particularly the head



and hair, but the blurred contour of the nude form is again Brook's typical reply to an issue that required a more positive statement. Brooks is at his best in his landscapes, where the forms, and not the sentiments associated with them, dictate their constructions.

#### JOHN CARROLL'S SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY

THE Frank K. M. Rehn Gallery is decked out with the festive paintings, new and old, of John Carroll, the seductive troubadour from Detroit who sings sweetly of love and foxhunts. Carroll makes no bones about the kind of sentiment he prefers to bring to his pictures. He likes fragile young things clothed in virginal whiteness and paints them with heartbreaking tenderness. He is the poet of puberty, chaste and expectant. He is also the poet of foxhunting, with an eighteenth-century English accent. In "The Meet-

ing" we have a happy union of Carroll's two selves—lover and hunter. The subject is downright silly, of course, but the painting, in parts, particularly the bridal horse, is commendable.

#### THE ARTISTS' UNION HITS A NEW HIGH

REVOLUTION begins at home—seems to be the new policy of the Artists' Union. Now that the Union has built up a strong organization, its members have decided to lay particular stress on the quality of the material included in their exhibitions. The current one at the A.C.A. Gallery on West Eighth Street clearly reflects this new policy for the first time. Of the fifty or more exhibiting artists at least two thirds have contributed pictures of real merit. And of these two thirds at least one half have submitted works that are comparable in every way to



GEORGIA O'KEEFFE: HILL, NEW MEXICO (OIL) 1935  
Courtesy An American Place

the majority of things one finds on Fifty-seventh Street. As a matter of fact many of them were known to Fifty-seventh Street before they were to Eighth Street. Among the contributing artists are many of whose names are already familiar to you: Glintenkamp, Meltsner, Stuart Davis, Maurice Becker, Louis Ferstadt, Ribak, Moses Soyer, Harry Gottlieb, Lonergan, etc.

Nor are these men painting according to some orthodox, Marxian formula that has been handed down to them. Glintenkamp's "Nude" doesn't look as if she ever worked in a sweatshop or stood on a picket line. But as nudes go she holds together and offers a very pleasing exterior to the public. Biel's

"Hurdy-Gurdy" is a bit in the Morris Kantor vein but is a sensitive and sound piece of work despite this derivation. William Sanger, of the birth-control Sangers, offers a very solidly constructed "Scrubwoman," perhaps the finest piece of pure painting in the show. Compositionally, however, it isn't as strong as it might be. Workers in the home, the shop, the factory, the mine, are the themes of a good portion of the pictures. We also get a fair amount of trenchant or humorous antibourgeois satire. Ferstadt, Tschabasov, and Schreiber supply some of the most effective thrusts. On the whole a splendid exhibition which holds out great promise for the future.



ALEXANDER BROOK:  
PEGGY BACON AND  
METAPHYSICS (OIL) 1935

Courtesy Downtown Gallery





JOHN CARROLL: MEETING AT TWILIGHT (OIL) 1935  
 Courtesy Frank K. M. Rehn Gallery

WILLIAM SANGER: THE SCRUBWOMAN (OIL)  
 Courtesy A.C.A. Gallery





THOMAS EAKINS · STARTING OUT AFTER RAIL  
A Recent Acquisition of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston



## FIELD NOTES

### *Design Laboratory, New York*

TO DATE one of the best articulated activities of the Federal Art Project of the Works Progress Administration is the Design Laboratory, 10 East 39th Street, New York. "It is a free school for instruction in industrial design, graphic arts and fine arts," according to its brochure. It is open only to those amateur and professional students who cannot afford to attend private art schools.

"Created to supply a hitherto unfulfilled and pressing need in America, the school emphasizes coördination in the study of esthetics, industrial products, machine fabrication and merchandising. It seeks to train designers, not specialized craftsmen, by correlating through instruction in the general principles of design and fine arts with shop practice.

"Emerging from a modern technique of living, all design whether for ash trays or railway trains, must synthesize to the utmost beauty, function, fabrication, and saleability. Instead of the existing artificial distinction between interior decoration and designing of mechanical objects, courses in the school are grouped according to present day trends in fabrication and the common spirit of design. In this manner wood, metal and plastics are treated as a unit. Likewise designs for lipstick cases and automobiles may be included in one course, for materials, tools and even design are similar.

"No rigid course of instruction is followed; the curriculum is based on the experimental procedure of a research laboratory. Development of ingenuity and esthetic judgment in the use of materials are limited only by the imagination of instructor and student.

"Shops are equipped with hand and machine tools so that students may learn the limitations of both. Free experimental production in interior architecture, furniture, industrial products and appliances, wood, metal, ceramics, glass, plastics and textiles will figure prominently in shop work. Advanced students will have the opportunity to participate

in designing and production for use, since the faculty includes well known and successful practitioners who bring to the classes their daily problems in the manufacturing field."

The Design Laboratory is fortunate in having Gilbert Rohde as Director and a faculty which includes Allan Gould, William Friedman, Roswell Snider, Theodore Müller, Hilde Reiss, Joseph J. Roberto in design; Ruth Reeves, Anna W. Franke, Robert J. Kingsbury, Peter Gonzales in textile printing and weaving; Nathaniel Dirk, Hans Foy, I. Rice Pieria in painting; Chaim Gross, Vladimir Yoffe in sculpture; Wesley Walker, Hermann Post in graphic arts; William Edler, Anton Van Dereck in metal; Saul Yalkert in wood; Harold Tishler in pottery; and Noel Vicentini, Kurt Schelling in photography.

Early in January the graphic arts and fine arts classes had been filled to capacity. Things were humming. If this is what some sneeringly called boon-doggling let's have more of it. Doubtless many who now complain will some day find that designers trained in the Design Laboratory are helping them improve and sell their products as business continues to gather momentum.

### *Student Initiative, Wisconsin*

MAY we record, though rather belatedly, the success of the Second Wisconsin Salon of Art held in November in the Wisconsin Union, community center and division of social education of the University of Wisconsin, Madison. In the first place a thousand people a day visited the exhibition of the one hundred and twenty-five works selected by the jury as the best produced by Wisconsin artists during the year.

Secondly, but of no less significance, the whole enterprise was conducted by an unprecedented method. From beginning to end the arrangements were conceived and executed by students in the University, working voluntarily as a committee of *The Wisconsin*, undergraduate daily, and aided by the Union staff. Students planned the rules of the competition, selected the jury, wrote to the

artists, unpacked and hung the pictures, arranged the opening reception, prepared the catalog and state-wide publicity, and successfully mastered the multitude of details that accompany the presentation of a large regional show, details, by the way, which ordinarily keep a professional staff in a pother for weeks on end. In this way, as the catalog announces, the Salon is becoming a fertile seeding ground for a future leadership in the cultural life of the State—an authentic and influential example of the function a state university is expected to serve.

The jury was composed of the inevitable Thomas Benton, Professor John Shapley, head of the University of Chicago art department, and Cameron Booth, painter-teacher of St. Paul.

First honors in oil painting went to Willi Anders of Milwaukee for his portrait, "Mufti"; in water color to Alvin Drover, Milwaukee art student for his "Landscape"; and in sculpture to Dick Wiken for his newel-post woodcarving, "The Alchemist."

### *The Art of Today—and Yesterday*

RARELY can one see in a single exhibition examples of work by those artists who, since the World War, have most engaged the attention of Western Europe and America. Yet the Albright Art Gallery in Buffalo put on such a show in January. Nationalistic lines were not drawn, the experimentalists from both sides of the Atlantic, the American Sceners, in fact representatives of all the



WILLIAM ZORACH:  
CHILD ON PONY

Included in the Exhibition,  
"The Art of Today,"  
Held in January at the  
Albright Art Gallery,  
Buffalo, New York





DORIS LEE: RURAL LANDSCAPE

Included in the Exhibition, "The Art of Today,"  
Held in January at the Albright Art Gallery, Buffalo

kaleidoscopic movements were brought together. Not only those men whose work seems now to be most nearly on the crest of the wave of fashion, but those who have held, even briefly during the 1920's, that unenviable position, and whose reputations today have begun to be sharply questioned were included in the exhibition called somewhat paradoxically "The Art of Today."

The Women's Advisory Committee of the Albright Art Gallery arranged and sponsored the show. Its members are to be congratulated on the evident thoroughness of the job they have done. And the staff of the Gallery is also to be congratulated on winning the support of a group of women influential in the community. It's the kind of support that has some ground in reality—there is nothing so absorbing as participation.

In its *Gallery Notes* the official voice of the Gallery points out *a propos* of the exhibition: "Art, as always, is the reflection of the

character of a civilization. The very instability of our modern society has led to experimentation in all fields, and in modern art this instability has led to results in painting and sculpture, made by hands directed by subtle minds, that are tremendously interesting to anyone who has eyes to see."

### *Mary Cassatt's Prints and Drawings*

"IT IS HIGH time that the graphic arts of Mary Cassatt be presented to the American public as among the most important contributions made by any American to this field. It is necessary to gain a perspective on the work of any artist before a true estimate of his or her ability may be set down in history, and not sufficient time has as yet elapsed since the death of Miss Cassatt in 1926 for us to make any final judgments about her rightful place in art history. But, even so, it is surprising to what a small restricted public

her graphic works are known, and since the character of this work is original and to some extent unique, it should indeed be featured as of outstanding importance and interest to the American art world. In the light of this conviction the present exhibition has been arranged."

The "present exhibition" is that of the graphic work of Mary Cassatt, which opened on January 7th and runs through February 10th, at the Baltimore Museum of Art. The paragraph quoted above is from the foreword to the catalog by Adelyn Dohme Breeskin, Curator of Prints and Drawings at the Museum.

Certainly it is high time that some such opportunity to see the pastels, water colors, prints, and drawings of this important American artist was provided. To the Baltimore Museum and those who have lent examples of Mary Cassatt's graphic art many of us must be grateful.

### *All-Time High: Modern Museum*

BACK before the war the Hispanic Museum in New York was surprised to find on its hands a roaring success, all due to its exhibition of paintings by Sorolla. And then the beloved John Singer Sargent's Memorial Exhibition, following close on his death in 1925, packed the Grand Central Galleries. But no exhibition of the work of a single artist, living or dead, has ever come near rolling up such attendance figures as the van Gogh exhibition during its run at the Museum of Modern Art, New York. In two months' time 123,339 people rubbed elbows and held their breath in the presence of van Gogh's art. Thanks to a fictionized reputation and expert press-agentry the Modern Museum established an all time high. But the popularity, be it noted, was justified; the Museum had the goods and it would be mere quibbling to decry the success built on and around a foundation of quality.

The success is likely to follow the van Gogh show around the country on this schedule: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Museum of Art, opened January 13th; Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, February 17th through March

16th; Cleveland, Cleveland Museum of Art, March 23rd through April 20th; San Francisco, California Palace of the Legion of Honor, April 27th through May 25th.

### *X-Ray Vision at the Fogg*

THE world's largest collection of X-ray shadowgraphs of famous paintings, numbering more than three thousand, is part of the working equipment of the Fogg Art Museum, a recent announcement revealed. With the help of a grant from the Carnegie Corporation made last year the collection will be still further expanded this year by the inclusion of shadowgraphs of paintings in European museums.

One hundred and fifty X-ray photographs of Rembrandts are included, as well as those of typical works by other great Europeans and about three hundred and fifty notable American pictures. This collection has been formed under the direction of Alan Burroughs, whose book *Limners and Likenesses* has recently come from the press.

The value of the information gathered by the use of the scientific methods used at the Fogg Museum is of great importance to those serious students who are intent on knowing just how the great painters of the western world went to work, to restorers, and to prospective purchasers of paintings about which some doubt may exist.

### *Community Art Centers, Chicago*

ALREADY in one park building in Chicago, and soon in others, Chicago citizens of note have arranged exhibition galleries in which art lent by the Art Institute can be shown to the public. The Administration Building in Garfield Park is the first to have undergone the metamorphosis. In its ornate marble rotunda have been placed casts of many a famous classic statue, in three adjoining rooms have been hung a group of twenty-six American paintings, most of them by the more conservative painters of the past and present centuries. This first exhibition, later to be supplanted by other loans from the Art Institute, drew fifty-seven hundred people





MAENAD, ROMAN COPY OF A GREEK RELIEF OF THE LATE FIFTH  
CENTURY B C

A Recent Acquisition of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

the first day, and ten thousand odd the first week.

The Citizens Committee on Art and Music in the Chicago Park District, appointed in the spring of 1935 by Daniel J. Burnham, is naturally pleased at the reception afforded its first gallery. As a consequence the plans to repeat the endeavor in parks in other sections of the city seem assured. By this program of coöperation the Park District is attempting to aid the Art Institute in extending art interest on the part of "citizens of all walks of life" so that more of them will follow up their interest by visiting the Institute itself.

### Accessions

THE classical collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art have recently been enriched by the acquisition of a marble relief of a maenad, the Roman Copy of a Greek work of the fifth century B.C. (See front cover and page 121.)

Gisela M. A. Richter writing of the relief in the Museum's *Bulletin* for January says, in part: "The subject is a maenad, clothed in

a diaphanous tunic and a mantle, leaning on her thyrsos while pausing in the dance. Though a few portions are missing, what is preserved is of unusual freshness, the carving crisp and delicate and the head miraculously entire.

"The relief is not a Greek original but is evidently a Roman copy of such exceptional quality that it closely approximates the original work. And this original must have been the product of a great artist. . . . There are many other examples both of the woman on our relief and of similar closely related figures, which bear witness to the great popularity enjoyed by these ecstatic maenads in the Roman age. . . ."

\* \* \*

An oil, "Vase of Flowers," by Odilon Redon, has recently been acquired by the Cleveland Museum of Art as a gift from a friend of the Museum. The color of the composition—violet to red against an orange-vermilion background—is subtle. Also, oil paint has been made to express as well

(Continued on page 128)



CLARE  
LEIGHTON:

CORSICAN  
WASHER-  
WOMEN

1936 Publication  
of the Print Club,  
Cleveland





CLARE LEIGHTON: ILLUSTRATION FROM "FOUR HEDGES"

Reproduced by kind permission of The Macmillan Company

## NEW BOOKS ON ART

### Clare Leighton's Garden

ONE longs, after reading *The Four Hedges*,\* to visit the garden of its author and to share her enthusiasm for the patch of chalky earth in the Chiltern Hills made fertile, luxuriant and beautiful by tender care and hard labor. Through word and picture, Clare Leighton has described this garden with the rich detail and relish which love alone can give. All the favorite flowers have been drawn and much characteristic horticultural work—planting, mowing, harvesting, burning brush—has been depicted on eighty-seven wood-blocks. Perhaps it is unfair to compare this latest book with the artist's earlier publications, for its whole spirit is more intimate. Yet the preface by John Taylor Arms, emphasizing the artistic quality, makes such a comparison imperative.

Appropriately enough the book is illustrated with vignettes which mingle with the letterpress. But, unfortunately, Miss Leighton's excellence lies in her picture-making abil-

ity and these cuts, for all their charm, have little of the sweeping quality of the 1933 *Farmer's Year* or the six engravings of logging which appeared in *The Forum* for January, 1931. There is nothing to compare with the lyrical "Ploughing" or the herculean "Cutting" of those two series. I do not mean that Miss Leighton's cuts lack merit, but as vignettes their relationship to the surrounding letterpress should have been more carefully considered. Taken individually, such engravings as the swallows perched on telegraph wires, "Sharpening the Scythe," or the head-piece "Axe and Block," are excellent. The six full-page cuts, although printed on blank leaves with no text, are but enlargements of the smaller vignettes in spirit. Their outlines, for no apparent reason, are as irregular as those of the true vignettes. Her touch is too coarse to rival the marvelous delicacy of the floral decorations of Curmer's *Paul et Virginie* of 1838. But set her masterful composition "Ploughing" of the *Farmer's Year* album, or "Corsican Washerwomen," which the Print Club of Cleveland has just published, beside one of these pages and, picture for picture, the romantic publication is totally eclipsed.

\* *Four Hedges, A Gardener's Chronicle*. Written and engraved by Clare Leighton. New York, 1935. The Macmillan Co. 173 pages, 87 wood-engravings. Price, \$3.00.

Although it is not my privilege to criticize Clare Leighton's text, there is one passage so infectious, and so typical of her joyous prose, that it must be shared:

"The moment for mowing has come . . . . My scythe moves on a perfectly level plane; I cut the same segments of a circle with each swing, so that as I carry the grass with the blade it falls from it in a perfectly straight line. By my side on the left grows the ridge of mown grass. As I walk forward in the orchard, I become the actual shapes I am making. I forget the individual grasses I am cutting; the beauty of the yellow melilot is destroyed unnoticed. All consciousness has left me; hypnotized, I am happy making shapes on the ground."

Charmed as we are by this intimate record, we hope that Clare Leighton as a wood-engraver will give whatever vignettes she may produce in the future the power and earthliness which characterized *The Farmer's Year*.

BEAUMONT NEWHALL

## Two Books on China

THESE two books,\* although written with the same end in view, that of presenting the long course of Chinese art history in concise form, are actually very different in the impression they convey. Both follow a sound method, that of considering art history an integral part of general history and approaching it chronologically; but while Mr. Silcock's narrative moves on constantly like a cinema story, Mrs. Carter has arranged her scenes to show greatest contrast with each other and they follow one upon the other more like separate acts in a play between which the curtain falls, if only for a minute. Both books were written primarily for the layman and as an introduction to further reading, or understanding of the art objects themselves.

When plans for the great International Ex-

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\* *Introduction to Chinese Art*. By Arnold Silcock. London and New York, 1935. Oxford University Press. xvii+268 pages. 27 plates, 16 text figures, 2 maps. Price, \$2.50.

*China Magnificent: Five Thousand Years of Chinese Art*. By Dagny Carter. New York, 1935. A John Day Book, Reynal and Hitchcock. xi+225 pages, including 83 plates. Price, \$4.00.

hibition of Chinese Art in London were being made last summer it was realized that among all the important works on Chinese art which have come out in recent years not one would be acceptable to the layman, Johnnie Public, who intended to visit the Exhibition and wanted to be moderately intelligent on the subject when confronted by this unfamiliar art. As a result many small handbooks and outlines have appeared which attempt to explain the art of China and present briefly its background.

Of these short introductions Mr. Silcock's is certainly one of the best. The story is told clearly, for the most part, and very engagingly. It incorporates the latest discoveries and is thoroughly up-to-date. It is most readable. For the purpose of the visitor to the Exhibition it is an excellent handbook for the exhibits would provide the illustrations which, it must be confessed, are not, in the book itself, provided in sufficient numbers to really represent Chinese art. As a means of preparing the beginner for the Exhibition it is excellent, however, and probably another edition will take into account the reader who did not go, and provide him with more illustrations, or at least a brief bibliography.

Mr. Silcock, who is an architect, reveals the breadth of his interests in his treatment of the question of influences, both external on China, and of Chinese on the art of other nations. The "isolation" of China, which has come to be an exploded theory for the specialist, he proceeds, most convincingly, to explode for the layman. Mr. Silcock is intensely interested in the contacts China had from most ancient times with far distant parts of the world and he makes the story a truly thrilling one. He also draws parallels with European art, without, however, going into details.

It is obvious, in the early chapters of his book, that Mr. Silcock owes a great deal to the work of Dr. J. G. Andersson on the prehistoric period and of Prof. Perceval Yetts on the early art of China, especially the bronzes, and other related material. He steps rather gingerly through Ch'in and Han until he comes to his first real discussion of architecture. Here he swings into his subject with a



self-assurance that continues to the end of the book. Although the dedication is to Mr. Binyon, as source of the author's inspiration, Mr. Silcock's descriptions of and remarks on painting are surprisingly meager. By contrast the space devoted to ceramics is over proportionate but the author's interest and knowledge in this field is apparent. As for his treatment of Chinese architecture, a subject little known and usually ignored, he is lucid, sure, and enthusiastic, and one recognizes the authority speaking. These passages are the best part of the book, although one's interest is sustained to the very end.

Mrs. Carter, widow of the brilliant author of *The Invention of Printing in China and Its Spread Westward*, who has since her husband's death, devoted herself to a study of the prehistoric period in China and of the Eurasian Animal Style, so-called, conceived her book some years ago and wrote it in 1934 before the London Exhibition was planned, but its publication happens to coincide with the great event. It is exceedingly original in conception and method and very stimulating both to mind and imagination. Actually it is not so much a history of Chinese art as it is a *commentary* on that history. Mrs. Carter's interest is in theories of origins, evidences of influences from without and within, and counter-influences, and speculations as to the mind and philosophy of the Chinese at different periods, which might have led to certain art forms. She leaves it to her many illustrations (to which she never refers) to speak for themselves as to *what* the art of China was, and devotes her text to a running comment which makes one feel as though he were "listening in" on a conference of specialists. These authorities take up and go through each period of Chinese art in turn, noting hastily, as they speed along, the numberless problems, questions, theories, and possible explanations, without stopping to discuss any of them. The result is something very exciting, very provoking, very pricking to the curiosity. One learns from this book quite as much about what is not yet known as what *is* known. For those who are stimulated to explore further there is a neat and well chosen bibliography for each chapter.

The greatest fault of the book, and that is a serious one, is the large number of mistakes, inaccuracies, and misleading statements, contained especially in the later chapters. That Mrs. Carter is more of an archaeologist than an artist is evident from her statements and comments on painting and on ceramics. Many of the less involved inaccuracies could be easily corrected and it is a pity that they have been allowed to stand for they render unreliable an otherwise brilliant and valuable bird's-eye view which should have a wide appeal.

HELEN E. FERNALD

### Louis Sullivan

TO HAVE garnered and gleaned as Mr. Morrison has done, in his *Life of Louis Sullivan*,\* is a labor for which he deserves high praise. That the records of Sullivan's life and activities had so soon become fugitive, is sad but ample evidence of what his countrymen thought about prophets. Patiently, Mr. Morrison has traced and pursued. The document he presents seems almost above criticism. One wants only to applaud. One knows that there can be only an appraisal based upon a difference in point of view. Mr. Morrison has chosen what I would call an ultra-academic method of placing Sullivan in his milieu, and to me that has the weakness of not placing him.

One might well hesitate in the face of such a thankless task. To develop the whole tragedy involves some unpleasant backgrounds. When Louis Sullivan arrived in Chicago, he was a veritable young David. In his sling was a theory; his mind outsoared all save a very few in the history of America; he had the presence of Thor; the clarion voice of Siegfried, and in an instant, he was marked for persecution and death. He had the temerity to challenge the rubbish that architects were then palming off. He labeled it, denounced it, excoriated it. He made no bones about either the buildings or their authors. They, caught *flagrant delit* in their humbuggery, shivered and shook. The wares on their shelves and the trinkets and frumpery in their

\* *Louis Sullivan: Prophet of Modern Architecture*. By Hugh Morrison. Published for the Museum of Modern Art by W. W. Norton and Co. New York, 1935. xxi + 414 pages; illustrated. Price, \$4.00.

shop windows were pointed to as shams, deceptions, swindles. Who cared? It was the moment when the sham and the swindle were in full sway. The Chicago that Sullivan looked at in 1881, young, vigorous, and bursting with the will to do and dare, was only another episode in the tale of the individual arrayed against society. Sullivan missed the undertones. He felt only the full free flow of an energy that echoed what was in his own young heart, for he, too, was bursting with the will to do and dare.

To the call of the tocsin he raised, a host of young men leaped to their lances. To their ears came the first real music they had ever heard. For them, he made the art of building a living, vibrant thing into which they could pour the very bowels of their yearning to be creatively free. What a song the master sang! What a charger he rode! What a void he filled in longing young hearts! What a hope he made to bloom in the spirits of those ardent passionate believers!

All the time, slowly and surely, his enemies were digging a dungeon. Sullivan's ideas had to be out of the way. What might happen to Sullivan, they didn't care. The World's Fair was their chance. Sullivan got his building to do. His wary fellows, hot on the trail of commissions, knew that the United States was going Imperial. The final stage may have been reached in the grotesque spendthriftery lately perpetrated in Washington, all of which traces directly back to the World's Fair. That was Waterloo for the idea that form had anything to do with function in a building, or in anything else. The form of the nation was then committed to the idea that getting wealth was the first function of man and that all else could go to hell and be damned with it.

Picture Louis Sullivan and his sling in the midst of this hopeless battle, and one gets the feel of the whole tragedy of Sullivan and all the rest of us. When I went to Chicago to ask him to write, we sat the whole afternoon and evening in the rooms of the Cliff Dwellers. Sullivan had been beaten. He knew he was beaten. He knew that he never had a chance. He knew that he had failed utterly in appraising the morality of his country. He knew, then, that the countrymen of his day

had never been interested in buildings save as a vehicle for their vanity, a means for raising land prices, or a device for helping to sell goods or ideas. He didn't want to write. He was too disillusioned. He wanted to forget, dire as were his circumstances. It was only when I hit on the question of what made him want to be an architect that there kindled a spark. Out of that spark, by careful nursing, there came the *Autobiography of an Idea*. It is a mistake to refer to this as "Autobiography." There are full glimpses of Sullivan in the book, and some of the grandest writing that ever fell from a pen, but they relate to the Idea. Sullivan is incidental. When the book was published, the revisions to which Mr. Morrison refers were almost wholly concerned with the word "Louie." I thought this reference to himself a weakness. It could not be changed in the serial publications for the chapters came barely in time to be set.

Also, may one regret Mr. Morrison's quotation in which Sullivan is said to have stated the problem of the skyscraper? My conviction is that he completely misstated it, as he later acknowledged to me. He totally ignored, in the quotation, the factor of site, and the horrors of traffic, congestion, taxation, debt, and disorder that the skyscraper produced. He had a budding vision of a possible world, but for the moment he saw only the aesthetic problem of treating the skyscraper as an expression of height. Aesthetically, if one pleases, that is still the problem, but to allow skyscraping aesthetics to plunge human beings into the quagmires of debt and insolvency, is a pretty slim apology for architecture, dire as is its need for one.

Again, by his theory, Sullivan saw the full maturity, in a building, of the natural law of seed and bloom. His use of ornament tells that story, and is as far from the present-day theory of functionalism as anything could be. It was only in his tombs that Sullivan found the true field for his theory. In these, he rose to his highest and best. The tombs tell the story of the flowering of life as an eternal process, which is quite a different idea from that of applying the principle of seed

(Continued on page 131)



★

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## FIELD NOTES

(Continued from page 122)

as pastel, the artist's more usual medium, the world of fantasy found in his work.

\* \* \*

The Smith College Museum of Art has, in recent months, added four works of interest to its collections. Three of them were announced together: "Collage," an abstract mosaic by Cesar Domela, a purchase; "Landscape," an oil by Louis Eilshemius, given by Elizabeth and Douglas Rigby in memory of Amy Stein Hamburger; and "White Marble Torso" by Gaston Lachaise, an anonymous gift.

More recently announced is the accession of the "Portrait of René de Gas," brother of the artist, by Edgar Degas. The picture, like many of the other portraits of members of the artist's family, stayed in the family until the death of René and the subsequent sale of Degas's work in 1927. It then passed into and through the hands of Ambroise Vollard and M. Knoedler and Company whence it went to Smith College. (See frontispiece.)

\* \* \*

To its growing group of modern American paintings the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, has just added "Starting out after Rail" by Thomas Eakins (page 116). It is an excellent example of what are often called his sporting pictures. Despite his ability as one of our most searching and sensitive portrait painters, some of Eakins's finest productions lie in the genre field.

### *Boston Museum Broadcasts*

AFTER hearing of the increased liberality and community usefulness of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston for a year or more the surprise of hearing of its new series of art broadcasts, which began in December, is considerably lessened. Certainly there is no danger of shock. Under the able Directorship of George H. Edgell, the Museum has begun to amplify its collections of contemporary American work; the Museum School has been undergoing a metamorphosis. This

newest venture which calls on the staffs of most New England museums is therefore all the more praiseworthy since it is but a part of an awakened program.

The broadcasts are given over Station WAAB, Boston, on Thursday evenings at eight (E.S.T.). The following twelve are yet to be given:

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| February 6  | <i>Rembrandt and His Circle</i> , by Francis Henry Taylor, Director, Worcester Art Museum.   |
| February 13 | <i>The Chinese Exhibition at London</i> , by Langdon Warner, Keeper of the Oriental Department, Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University.   |
| February 20 | <i>The van Gogh Exhibition at Boston</i> , by Charles V. Cunningham, Assistant Curator of Paintings, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.  |
| February 27 | <i>Nineteenth-Century French Paintings in the Collection of the Smith College Museum of Art</i> , by Jere Abbott, Director, Smith College Museum of Art.   |
| March 5     | <i>Innovations in Activities Offered by the Wadsworth Atheneum</i> , by A. Everett Austin, Director, Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford.   |
| March 12    | <i>The Ancient Buildings of New England and the Society that Protects Them</i> , by George Francis Dow, Director, Museum of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, Boston. |
| March 19    | <i>Arts and Crafts of New Hampshire</i> , by Maud Briggs Knowlton, Director, Currier Gallery of Art, Manchester.   |
| March 26    | <i>Maya Art and Architecture</i> , by Alfred M. Tozzer, Curator of Middle American Archaeology and Ethnology, Peabody Museum, Harvard University.  |
| April 2     | <i>Chester Harding</i> , by John Lee Clarke, Jr., Director, Springfield Museum of Fine Arts.   |
| April 9     | <i>A Museum of Fine Arts as a Source of Inspiration for the Needleworker</i> , by Gertrude Townsend, Curator of Textiles, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.   |
| April 16    | <i>Winslow Homer in the Addison Gallery</i> , by Charles H. Sawyer, Curator, Addison Gallery of Amer-  |



ican Art, Phillips Academy, Andover.

April 23

*New Accessions to the Collections in the Museum of Fine Arts*, by George H. Edgell, Director, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

### *Rembrandt Goes to Worcester*

THROUGH generous collaboration from the Art Institute of Chicago the exhibition, "Rembrandt and His Circle," mentioned in last month's Field Notes, is to be shown at the Worcester Art Museum from February 5th throughout the month. The Museum's *News Bulletin and Calendar* hails it as the most important exhibition to be shown in Worcester for many years.

The important loan from the Louvre, Rembrandt's "Christ at Emmaus," was late in arriving at Chicago, which led authorities at the Art Institute to postpone the closing of its exhibition.

An important feature of the Worcester showing will be the seminar conducted by leading authorities in this country on Dutch painting for students and teachers in the New England colleges and universities over the week-end of Washington's birthday, February 21st, 22nd, and 23rd.

### *Japanese Moderns, Toledo*

DURING January the Toledo Museum of Art held an exhibition of wood-block prints by ten Japanese artists. The show gave a retrospective view of five years' work by these men, augmenting the exhibition held in March, 1930. The artists represented were: Hakuho, Hasui, Kiyoshi, Kotondo, Shinsui, Shiro, Shoson, Shunsen, Yoshida, and Yoshimitsu.

In the preface to the catalogue J. Arthur MacLean, Curator of the Department of Oriental Art, points out that: "The process of wood-block printing today is quite like that followed in earlier periods. The artist or designer paints his cartoon with a brush and designates the color scheme. The wood-block cutter, a craftsman often working independently of the designer, meticulously follows the outline of each brush-stroke and cuts the

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pictures in relief. The printer, still another independent worker, prints the edition. Sometimes the designer himself cuts the blocks and prints the edition, but generally the designer turns his original work over to a publisher, who furnishes the cutter and the printer and also becomes the distributing agent. . . .

"Wood-block printing has an enviable tradition in Japan, and, as a matter of fact, was one of the first forms of Japanese art to be brought to the attention of the western world. . . .

"Modern Japanese prints will become more and more the vogue because they are conceded not only to have eminent artistic qualities but also to represent technical perfection. . . ."

## "We Gather Together"

STARTING on the fourteenth of February and continuing for the two following days artists from all over the country are gathering in New York in the Artists' Congress to discuss their problems. This is really tremendously significant because of the variety of aesthetic and social attitudes brought together in a common and essential undertaking.

Mr. Ernest Brace, whose article on Adolf Dehn appears in this issue, in writing us of the forthcoming Congress says: "Within an amazingly short period of time the question of whether artists can, should, or will organize has, like the work of so many individual painters, lost most of its abstract aloofness. The fact is that a great many of them have already organized and that more and more of them are being faced with the necessity of choosing between precarious independence and a closer association with their fellow craftsmen. That the basis of their getting together is usually economic indicates rather a frank recognition of their plight than a conscious limiting of their scope. If their work implies that men cannot live by bread alone, their living is a constant reminder that he certainly cannot live or paint without it.

The Artists' Union, the recent demand by the renascently militant American Society of Painters, Sculptors and Gravers, for rental fees from museums, and now the organization of a national congress of artists are only a few of the more general and potent indications that the laissez-faire days of Greenwich Village and Montparnasse are gone. Like it or not, artists are actively organizing and their collective discussions and resolutions can no more be ignored in considering contemporary American art than French influence can be neglected in appraising the painting of the 1920's.

"Since midsummer of last year a group of artists has been meeting frequently to organize the American Artists' Congress. . . . In general, the plan of the Congress will parallel that of the Writers' Congress last winter which proved such an overwhelming success and which sold out every seat in Mecca



Temple. The general public will be admitted to the opening meeting of the Congress which will consider the less professional aspects of the artist's position in society: his impotence in fascist countries, the danger and evidences of dictatorship in America, and the artist's relationship to other groups in society. The ensuing two days of sessions, closed to all but members of the Congress, will include the reading of papers and discussion on the position of the artist in societies of the past, his present economic and cultural situation and the dangers inherent in it, and finally a consideration of the outlook and how best he may achieve broader appreciation of his work and the greater assurance of its continuance. Harried by his knowledge of the fate of the arts and artists in both Italy and Germany, it is inevitable that the broad basis of the artist's attempt to organize nationally should be opposition to fascism and its necessary concomitant, war. . . ."

### *Lionello Venturi on Art Criticism*

LIONELLO VENTURI, one of the world's authorities on Italian renaissance art is giving a course, beginning on Friday, February 7th and running weekly thereafter, at the New School for Social Research, 66 West 12th Street, New York. His subject is the History of Art Appreciation.

Beginning with a discussion of epochs of art criticism, Mr. Venturi will, during the course of his lectures, consider the art of the Greeks, the Romans, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and the Baroque period; neo-classicism, romanticism and the primitives; nineteenth-century art, its philologists, archaeologists, connoisseurs, and critics; the science of art and the new historical art criticism.

### NEW BOOKS ON ART

(Continued from page 126)

and bloom to buildings used for making money. This factor in Sullivan's theory is too often overlooked. He was a prophet, one of the greatest, but the strength and beauty of his prophecy are far more embedded in what he wrote than in what he built. Let us be honest about it, we who loved him dearly and who saw him suffer. He was not a great

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architect. He would have been one had he been born in a society that had any social comprehension or the slightest interest in civilization as a cultural process. There simply was none of either. There was only showmanship and salesmanship. There was blatant bigness and pseudo-culture. As for the Chicago of Louis Sullivan's day, Eugene Field made the true picture for us.

Thanks be to Hugh Morrison all the same. In his chapter entitled "A Critical Estimate" he gives us a glimpse of his own straightforward concept of the art of buildings as first of all a social utility. So also does he

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make us wish that his story of Sullivan had been less academic and more human, for Sullivan was first of all a great, a grand, and a glorious human being. His professional brethren crowned him with thorns and gave him vinegar for his wounds.

CHARLES HARRIS WHITAKER

## American Art Complete

WITH this volume \* there becomes available a reasonably priced, adequately illustrated, and textually sound survey of all the arts in this country. There have been no changes in the latter part of the book; this is a reprint of the handbook issued in 1934 in connection with a series of radio broadcasts. Its predecessor, which dealt with the arts developed before the Civil War, has been re-

\**Art in America: A Complete Survey*. Edited by Holger Cahill and Alfred H. Barr, Jr. New York, 1935. Reynal and Hitchcock. viii plus 162 pages; illustrated. \$3.50.

organized and greatly enlarged in order to make its scale of presentation fit this combined issue. In this more liberal arrangement there has been a gain of forty-four illustrations in mere numbers; there have been, besides, sufficient substitutions for repetitive items to secure a more representative range of material—a point particularly noticeable in the section on architecture. In the matter of text, also, there has been a proportionate increase; but here even more importance attaches to a change of tone than to additional facts. Moreover, the material is better arranged as history, better articulated in a time-scheme. Among the illustrations should have been one example of the early gravestone, and mention of these in the text does not constitute an adequate discussion. In illustration there is perhaps an exaggerated emphasis on the folk paintings; some of these might well have been supplanted by reproductions from earlier graphic arts; and the latter should have received separate treatment in the text. But such relatively minor faults do not keep this book from being, within its price range, the best book now available.

VIRGIL BARKER

## Toward a New Architecture

SIX months have passed\* since I first read this remarkable essay † which inexplicably has not yet found a publisher in our country. And reflecting on it with more leisure than is usually permitted a critic I have concluded that it is a book which richly deserves the attention of American readers, despite the minor difficulties of persuading one's bookseller to secure a copy from abroad. The author is very largely responsible for the unique architectural progress of post-war Germany, and was the initiator and for many years director of the ill-fated Bauhaus in Dessau. For two years now he has lived in London, and from this detached vantage point has reviewed for us the development of modern architecture and the role of the Bauhaus school in this movement.

Perhaps the best opening to a discussion of

† *The New Architecture*. By Walter Gropius. London 1935. Faber and Faber. Price, 6s.



this essay is to say that Dr. Gropius is satisfied neither with the modern architecture of today nor with the theories and slogans of its principal apologists. And if we review the German debacle with especial reference to architecture, as I attempted to do in this magazine two years ago, the reason is not difficult to perceive. There is no new architecture in Germany today comparable in vigor and originality to that produced before the revolution. And today German thinking about architecture is as hopelessly muddled and confused as German architecture itself—or even German thinking itself. Not only is there no succor for the intelligent architect in Germany today; but to a certain type of German—even exiled Germans—the pre-revolutionary design and its philosophy has somehow lost much significance. Not so much by political realities has it been invalidated as that in the course of its own independent evolution it has become vulnerable because of its failure to fully include human as well as technical and aesthetic elements. The best of the exiled German architects have come to this conclusion. For the critic and others who wish to document this new opinion (which contains within itself the seeds of a new architectural movement) I cite with Dr. Gropius' book the recent essay of Marcel Breuer in the April, 1935, issue of the *English Architectural Review*.

Once one has said that this is a book by the man who sat in the cockpit of the modern architectural movement during its fifteen most fruitful years, and that it contains a detailed account of the most original and productive art school of our times by the man who conceived and directed it, there seems little use in further description. Within the limitations of its subject it is the best and most profound statement, not only of the past but of the possible future architecture, in Germany as well as elsewhere.

F. A. GUTHEIM

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# NEWS AND GOSSIP

BY L. B. HOUFF, JR.

## Poster Winners

THE Institute of Foreign Travel announces the winners in its recent poster contest. Eugene Zion, of Brooklyn, walked off with the honor of first place, plus \$500 and a free round trip to Europe, on a liner of his own choosing. Second prize of \$200 was awarded to Weimer Pursell, of Chicago; and Rollin C. Smith, Jr., of Los Angeles, is richer by \$100—the value of the third prize—for his efforts.

All three posters are strikingly executed. Unquestionably, they will do a good “selling” job and induce more travelers to turn their eyes and steps toward Europe. But if I may be a self-constituted critic for a moment, I should like to reverse the order of No. 1 and

No. 2, and present Mr. Pursell with the blue ribbon.

Not only do I feel his poster to be a better design, but it imparts, to me, more of a desire to go to Europe. Here is Continental



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EUGENE ZION: POSTER  
Their No. 1—Our Close Second

suavity . . . the atmosphere of the Austrian Tyrol . . . the architecture of ancient Rome . . . the essence of the land itself . . . and a Swiss Alpinist thrown in for good measure! And all very cleverly and subtly done.

Other interesting facts about this contest appear on the inside front cover of this issue.

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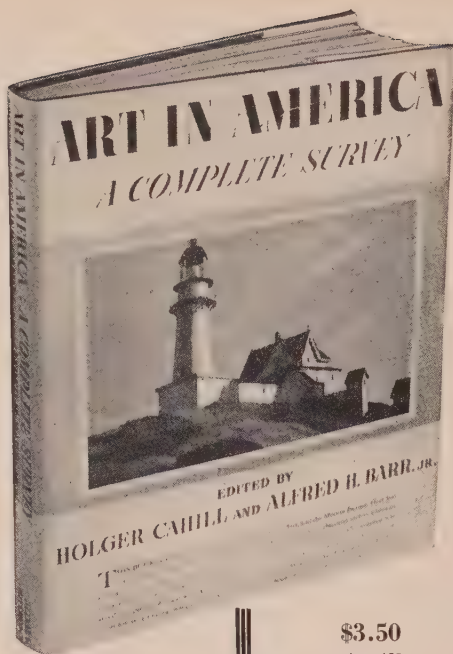
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Incidentally, there will be an art exhibition in connection with the Olympic Games in Germany. More about this next month.

### Activity in Wichita

THE Board of Directors of the Wichita Art Association is a resourceful group. Without funds to provide for a Director or Secretary, they have worked out a unique method of keeping the museum functioning. Students in the Art School, which is connected with the Association, earn their tuition by working in the Museum.

Thus, the students get their art education with no cash outlay—and practical experience as well—and the museum work is carried on economically and efficiently, as one would judge from the list of activities, partially reprinted here:

"Two exhibitions are held each month; dinners are given to visiting artists; regular lectures are scheduled; art clubs in high schools and nearby colleges are conducted; and more than four hundred children from elementary schools are given gallery talks each week."

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### Mother Lode Country

ROGER STURTEVANT has done some remarkable photographs of historic homes and places in the Gold Country. Taken in connection with the Historic American Building Survey, the pictures depict the types of buildings and communities of California's early permanent settlers.

One can easily pick out the section of the country from which these pioneers migrated, by the character of their homes and buildings. On one side of a street we see the architecture of the Southern Plantation Manor. On the

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other side, a bit of Salem or Philadelphia. Here or there, we see a rambling bit of Texas construction, and occasionally the almost pure influence of the old country.

One hundred and thirty-five of these unusually interesting photographs have been assembled into an exhibition, which is being circulated by the Federation, with the cooperation of the Union Pacific Railway.

There are still a few openings on the circuit. Miss Helen Cambell, at national headquarters, will give interested organizations complete information.

Civic Improvement

THE roads leading into most of our American towns and cities present vistas which are singularly unattractive and forbidding. This is even true of several of the main arteries into the Nation's Capital—one of which passes by a continually burning dump.

Fortunately, there is a growing movement to beautify the approaches to our towns, and two instances have just now come to my attention. The Mississippi Art Association has sponsored civic improvement in Jackson by planting crepe myrtle on all public highways leading into the town. And if you should drive through Saugatuck, Michigan, this summer, you will find the village streets blooming with iris. The Saugatuck Art Gallery is co-operating in this venture, and Iris Day will be celebrated in June.

What more practical or appropriate way could there be to apply the principles of art?

Annual Convention

THE 27th Annual Convention of the Federation meets in Washington on May 13th, and culminates in the Grand Banquet on the 15th.

This year's sessions promise to be unusually lively. There are many major issues to be discussed, points of contention in the art world to be debated, and the Federation's program for the coming year fabricated.

The conventions, in recent years, have been resolving more and more into an open forum, with short panel discussions, and those on



the floor participating. This type of session will predominate more than ever this year.

Why not plan now to attend? Washington in the Spring is something you'll always remember, and you are assured of a pleasant and refreshing visit.

*Special Note to Chapters:* Please appoint your delegates as soon as possible. Special delegate blanks will be mailed to you.

### Other Conventions in the Field

*Western Arts Association*, Nashville, Tennessee, April 1-4.

*Southern States Art League*, 16th Annual Convention, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, April 3-4.

*Eastern Arts Association*, Hotel Pennsylvania, New York City, April 15-18.

*American Institute of Architects*, Williamsburg, Virginia, May 5-8.

*Association of Art Museum Directors*, New York City, May 9-11.

*American Association of Museums*, New York City, May 11-13.

### Tenacity

IN DIGGING below the upper crust of art achievement in this country, I find a substrata of innumerable small groups which are doing valuable work, with practically no funds—but with all the fire and spirit of the Vikings who sailed the seas in galleys.

Such an organization is the Ladies' Library and Art Association, of Independence, Kansas. Composed of only 60 members, with annual dues of \$3 a year, look at this record of accomplishment:

Organized in 1882, it secured, in 1907, a Carnegie Library. An art gallery is maintained in the Library, with a permanent collection of 21 paintings and etchings.

Regular exhibitions are also held, with loans from artists. Dramatic programs are given, to raise funds. And the Association is contributing to a rural school project to stimulate a love of art.

At the moment, the purchase of property adjacent to the Library is being considered,

## INTRODUCTION TO CHINESE ART

BY ARNOLD SILCOCK

Dealing with every department of Chinese art, this interesting volume describes the various phases of art together with the conditions and history of the relevant periods. Of particular value are the series of tables specially prepared to show the parallel events and periods in the history of our own West. Illustrated with 30 photographs, 30 line drawings and a map. \$2.50

## THE NEW ARCHITECTURAL SCULPTURE

BY WALTER RAYMOND AGARD

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for a community center, in which the permanent collection will be housed, and other art activities conducted.

Usually "ladies'" societies bear the connotation "pink tea affairs." The very antithesis, here!

### CURE FOR COLLECTORITIS

(Continued from page 73)

In whatever part of the expanding world the artist chooses to function he will find group solidarity a safeguard against public misconceptions. Rightly he will rely on it more and more. But he would do well to remember that it is the quality of the man that counts; he must bring the same integrity, the same balance, the same purpose which he preserved in his studio out into the bigger world. However difficult the transition may be, if he fails in that respect not only he, but also his new clientele will have nothing to share but dissatisfaction.

F. A. WHITING, JR.

## A Forecast Of The Spring Issues Of **PRINTS**

Continuing the established policy of dealing with all aspects of graphic art in America, the April and June issues of **PRINTS** will include the following features:

### OF GENERAL INTEREST

"Distortion, Sweetness and the Grotesque," a provocative discussion of art elements by *Nathaniel Pousette-Dart*.

A review of the California Printmaker's International exhibition by *Merle Armitage*.

A survey of the outstanding printmakers in all sections of the United States.

"Prints of the Moment," "The Technical Side of Prints" book reviews and other departmental comment.

Over thirty reproductions of prints, new and old, in each issue.

### FOR COLLECTORS

An article on Goya, based on the exhibition at Detroit.

Discussions of the Goodspeed Collection at Worcester and the Lewis Collection at Philadelphia.

Starting with the current discussion of "Early American Aquatints" by Sydney Kellner, each issue will contain at least one article on American prints.

### FOR ARTISTS

A discussion of the technique of rebiting plates, by *Arthur Millier*.

### FOR MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

A wealth of valuable reference material—notably to be found in the comprehensive survey of present-day American artists, mentioned above.

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## New York Exhibitions—February

(Listed through the cooperation of the  
"New York Art Calendar")

*American Museum of Natural History*, 77th St. and Central Pk. W. Exhibit of pictures, under auspices of the Amateur Astronomers Association, to Feb. 10.

*An American Place*, 509 Madison Ave. New paintings by Georgia O'Keeffe, to Feb. 27.

*Another Place*, 43 W. 8th St. Paintings and water colors by Nicholas Luisi, to Feb. 29.

*Architectural League of New York*, Amer. Fine Arts Bldg., 215 W. 57th St. 50th Annual Exhibition, Feb. 18 to Feb. 29.

115 E. 40th St. Mural paintings, decorations and drawings by Andre Durenceanu, Feb. 3 to Feb. 8; foreign sketches by Nicola D'Ascenzo, Feb. 10 to Feb. 15.

*Arden Gallery*, 460 Park Ave. Wax sculpture by Mexican satirist Luis Hidalgo, to Feb. 14.

*Argent Gallery*, 42 W. 57th St. Black and White Exhibition by Nat'l Ass'n of Women Painters and Sculptors, Feb. 3 to Feb. 15; compositions with birds by Berta N. Briggs, sculpture by Jessie A. Stagg, paintings by Alexander Sideris, Feb. 17 to Feb. 29.

*Art Students League*, 215 W. 57th St. Drawings by members and instructors, oils by Alexander Abels, Feb. 11 to Feb. 21; tapestries and their cartoons; water colors, drawings and oils by William C. McNulty, Feb. 25 to Mar. 7.

*Bignou*, 32 E. 57th St. Paintings by Cezanne, Courbet, Van Gogh, Monet, Renoir, to Feb. 8.

*Brooklyn Museum*, Eastern Pkwy. European wood cuts, to Feb. 9; materials and processes of art, to March 1; Dance in art, to March 15.

*Camera Club*, 121 W. 68th St. Prints by Thomas O. Sheckull, to Feb. 15.

*Carnegie Hall Gallery*, 154 W. 57th St. New Year Exhibition, to March 10.

*Carstairs*, 11 E. 57th St. "French Impressionists and After."

*Caz-Delbo*, 113 Rockefeller Concourse. "Light and Shadows" by Corini, to Feb. 29.

*Clayton*, 108 E. 57th St. Etchings by Harry Wickey, animal drawings by Herman Palmer, to Feb. 15; paintings by A. J. Bogdanove, Feb. 15 to Mar. 15.

*Contemporary Arts*, 41 W. 54th St. Encaustics, oils and water colors by Milton Douthat, to Feb. 8; wood sculpture by Boris Kagen, Feb. 10 to Feb. 22; Group Exhibition, Feb. 24 to Mar. 14.

*Delphic Studios*, 724 Fifth Ave. Water colors by Stephen Colgate Howard, paintings by Richard Taggart and by Julia Codesido.

*Ehrich-Newhouse*, 578 Madison Ave. Paintings by C. A. Ricciardi, to Feb. 5; paintings by Eric Goldberg, to Feb. 11; paintings of Southern negro life by Mrs. E. Paxton Oliver, Feb. 7 to



# KENNETH CALLAHAN, Art Critic of the Seattle Daily Times, echoes the enthusiasm of art critics every- where, when he writes:

"One of the most original and significant figures in contemporary American painting is John Marin, who with his work, is the subject of a monograph by E. M. Benson, recently published by The American Federation of Arts.

"With the appearance of this volume, The American Federation of Arts takes its initial step into the field of monograph publication. The excellence of this first volume in content, both with its splendid illustrations and the fine articles on this painter, makes the Federation's entry into this field of art publication of real significance.

"The selection of John Marin as the subject of the volume is interesting and praiseworthy, as he has not only been ignored in the monograph field, but is as well, a modern painter who is considerably in advance of popular taste.

## CLINGS TO OWN METHODS

"Marin, as Benson, an Associate Editor of The American Magazine of ART

points out, is an isolated figure in the contemporary field, as he has clung to his own methods and insists on working out his destiny as a painter.

"He has passed through all the violent changes and influences from Impressionism to today, avoiding all and doggedly holding to his own personal interpretations, which has resulted in an art that is entirely individual and personal.

"It is as well an art that should be most widely received, if one will but put aside classical prejudices, for it is based directly on acute observation and vital awareness to nature.

"The volume includes fifty-one plates. With these illustrations, Marin's development is traced very comprehensively. Of added interest in addition to the two articles by Mr. Benson on Marin, the man, and Marin's work, are selections from Marin's letters; and his palettes, both in oil and water color."

IF YOU haven't a copy of "John Marin, The Man and His Work," you don't know what you are missing. This still goes, even if you actively hate Marin's work, provided you are open-minded.

Here is a book you will not only enjoy reading, but one you will be proud to have in your library. A limited edition, most reasonably priced at \$2.50 the copy. The coupon on the right is for your convenience.

The American Federation of Arts,  
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Marin, The Man and His Work.

My check, at \$2.50 each, is en-  
closed.

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- Feb. 22; paintings and drawings by Angna Enters (Egypt and Near East, Guggenheim Fellowship), Feb. 19 to Mar. 7.
- Ferargil*, 63 E. 57th St. Paintings by Eugene Savage, Florida paintings by Alice Murphy, prints by Max Pollack, to Feb. 9.
- Fifteen Gallery*, 37 W. 57th St. Water colors by Herbert B. Tschudy, Feb. 3 to Feb. 15; paintings by Isabel Whitney, Feb. 17 to Feb. 29.
- Fischer*, 61 E. 57th St. Paintings by Abraham Manievich, to Feb. 15; paintings by Loxton Knight, Feb. 17 to Feb. 29.
- Gatterdam*, 925 Seventh Ave. Water colors and oils by Adam C. Maurer, to Feb. 15.
- Grand Central Art Galleries*, 15 Vanderbilt Ave. Annual Exhibition of American Society of Miniature Painters, Feb. 4 to Feb. 22; paintings by Marie Danforth Page and Marion P. Sloane, Feb. 11 to Feb. 22; small paintings by Carl Lawless, Feb. 25 to Mar. 7. *Fifth Ave. Branch*, 1 E. 51st St. Paintings by Hobart Nichols, Feb. 17 to Feb. 29.
- Grant Studios*, 110 Remsen St., Brooklyn. Prints and sculpture, including Cleveland Print-makers "50 Best," Feb. 3 to Feb. 18; Brooklyn Society of Modern Artists and guests, Feb. 24 to Mar. 10.
- Guild Art Gallery*, 37 W. 57th St. Paintings by Jacques Zucker, to Feb. 15; paintings in egg tempera by Philip Reisman, Feb. 17 to Mar. 1.
- Harriman*, 61-63 E. 57th St. Drawings by Halicka, paintings by Arthur Carles, to Feb. 8.
- Kennedy*, 785 Fifth Ave. Old colored prints of flowers and birds by Audubon, Gould and others, to Feb. 15.
- Keppel*, 16 E. 57th St. Etchings and drawings by Ernest D. Roth, to Feb. 10.
- Kleemann*, 38 E. 57th St. Water colors by Margaret Lowengrund, to Feb. 15; drawings and paintings by Eugene Higgins, Feb. 17 to Feb. 29.
- Knoedler*, 14 E. 57th St. Water colors by Winslow Homer (1836-1910) commemorating centenary of his birth, to Feb. 8; paintings by Jacovleff, Feb. 10 to Feb. 22.
- Levy, Julien*, 602 Madison Ave. Paintings by Massimo Campigli, to Feb. 17; paintings by Walter Quirt, Feb. 18 to Mar. 3.
- Macbeth*, 11 E. 57th St. Centennial Exhibition of paintings by Homer D. Martin; etchings by Ernest Haskell, to Feb. 29.
- Matisse*, 51 E. 57th St. Paintings by eight moderns, to Feb. 8.
- McDonald*, 665 Fifth Ave. Lithographs by Odilon Redon, to Feb. 20.
- Metropolitan Museum of Art*, Fifth Ave. and 82nd St. French Prints and Ornament of the XVIII Century, Gal. K37-40, to Feb. 15; Goya Exhibition, Gal. D6 to Feb. 15; Egyptian Acquisitions, 1934-35.
- Morton*, 130 W. 57th St. Paintings by Herman Rednick, Feb. 3 to Feb. 15; oils, etchings, metal-osque panels by Roselle H. Osk, Feb. 17 to Feb. 29.
- Museum of the City of N. Y.*, Fifth Ave. at 103rd St. Parades and Processions in N. Y., Photographs of N. Y. Shop Windows of 1935, Late XIX Century Brocade Dresses, Hamlet in New York, to April.
- Museum of Modern Art*, 11 W. 53rd St. Oil paintings, water colors and drawings presented by Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., to Feb. 15; Cubism and Abstract Art, Feb. 26 to Apr. 12.
- National Arts Club*, 119 E. 19th St. "Text-Book of the Future and Its Forerunners," under auspices of the American Institute of Graphic Arts, Feb. 5 to Feb. 26.
- National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors*, 215 W. 57th St. 45th Annual Exhibition, to Feb. 11.
- New York Public Library*, Fifth Ave. and 42nd St. Fifty Books of the Year, opens Feb. 11; Mark Twain Centenary Exhibition, Main Exhibition Room, to Apr. 15; Japanese Figure Prints (1770-1800), to Apr. 16.
- Paris*, 56 W. 53rd St. Oils, gouaches, and drawings by A. F. Levinson, to Feb. 15; paintings by L. Jean Liberte, Feb. 16 to Mar. 7.
- Passedoit*, 22 E. 60th St. Drawings by Edwin W. Dickinson, Feb. 3 to Feb. 18.
- Raymond & Raymond*, 40 E. 52nd St. Reproductions of abstractions, to Feb. 29.
- Rehn*, 683 Fifth Ave. Paintings and water colors by Allen Tucker, Feb. 3 to Feb. 22.
- Salmagundi Club*, 47 Fifth Ave. Annual Water Color Exhibition, Feb. 14 to Feb. 28.
- Seligmann (Arnold), Rey & Co.*, 11 E. 52nd St. French XVIII Century drawings, to Feb. 29.
- Seligmann, Jacques*, 3 E. 51st St. Water colors by Gordon Grant, to Feb. 11.
- Society of Illustrators*, 334½ W. 24th St. Work by Ruth Sigrid Grafstrom, to Feb. 7.
- Staten Island Institute of Arts & Sciences*, St. George. Greek and Roman Art lent by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, to March 8.
- Sterner*, 9 E. 57th St. Paintings by Zoltan Sepesky, sculpture by Jean de Marco, to Feb. 22.
- Sullivan, Mrs. Cornelius J.* 57 E. 56th St. Irish landscapes by Paula MacWhite, Feb. 4 to Feb. 25.
- Uptown Gallery*, 249 West End Ave. "As the Artist Sees Himself," to Feb. 14.
- Walker*, 108 E. 57th St. Undersea paintings by Virginia Berresford, Feb. 3 to Feb. 16.
- Whitney Museum of American Art*, 10 W. 8th St. Second Biennial Exhibition, Part I, Contemporary Sculpture, Drawings and Prints, to Feb. 13; Part II, Contemporary Water Colors and Pastels, Feb. 18 to Mar. 18.
- Wildenstein*, 19 E. 64th St. Drawings by La Motte, Feb. 5 to Feb. 20.



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Not all of us are crusaders, leading the attack. Most artists, for instance, are contemplative men who work apart from the general fray. But even the most peaceful of them is allied to the campaign to this extent: he establishes standards and maintains them. He tries to see things for what they are. Like the scientist who works alone in the laboratory, the artist is experimenting with man, in search of truth that has not been disclosed. He is penetrating beneath the surface to fundamentals.

BROOKS ATKINSON